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FROM PAUL TO JESUS[1]

by The Very Rev. Principal G. S. DUNCAN

It is better that the theme of a Presidential Address should be too general than that it should be too specific. On this occasion I propose that together we traverse familiar ground. Beginning with the broad river of Christian doctrine as we have it in the Epistles of St. Paul, let us take our way up-stream, trying to trace afresh some of the channels by which it is linked with the living springs that come from Jesus.

1. How Paul interpreted the Gospel

Some of us will recall how we got our first challenging introduction to this problem by the publication in 1905 of Wrede's *Paulus*, of which an English translation appeared two years later. It was in a sense a sequel to his well-known book dealing with the Messianic Secret in the Gospels—a work which, though with good reason Sanday described it as " wrong-headed ", exercised a decisive influence on the subsequent course of Gospel-criticism, and (as Dr. R. H. Lightfoot has emphasised in his Bampton Lectures) continues still to confront us with problems which we dare not ignore. I have no mind to speak with similar appreciation of Wrede's little book on Paul, despite the stir which followed its appearance. His contention that the Christian apostle simply carried forward into his new-found faith messianic doctrines which he had inherited from Judaism, and was content to drape them around an unreal figure, Jesus, of whom he knew little and cared less, is fundamentally perverse. Indeed the greatest positive value of Wrede's *Paulus* was that it provoked a vigorous counter-current in critical scholarship, forcing us to recognise that the Pauline theology, however much its form may have been moulded in accordance with Jewish messianic thought, was in everything that concerned its inner life the product of the vitalising and transforming influence of Jesus. An undeniable channel, we now see, connects

[1] Presidential Address given at Oxford in September 1948 at the Second General Meeting of the *Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas*.

the theology of the Pauline Epistles with the divine Figure whose earthly career and teaching are presented to us in our written Gospels. The problem still remains, however, to define the course of that channel more precisely.

I do not propose to discuss at all how far Paul, the citizen of Tarsus, the pupil of the humane Gamaliel, and the apostle of Christ to the Gentiles, may have been influenced in his presentation of the Gospel by the religious conceptions of the Hellenistic world. The dominating influences in his thinking (the one reacting upon the other) were clearly those two to which we have already referred, (*a*) the unrivalled apprehension which he had of all that was truly vital in the religion of Israel, and (*b*) the all-pervasive influence of Jesus, whom, since that soul-shattering experience on the road to Damascus, Paul recognised and proclaimed as Messiah and Lord. In this connexion I should like to pay a tribute to the learned, comprehensive and (on the whole) well-balanced contribution recently provided by a young scholar, Dr. W. L. Davies, in his book on " Paul and Rabbinic Judaism ". In the thought of Paul (so Davies argues) Jesus the crucified, risen and exalted Messiah, after accomplishing for His people a new Exodus and a new Deliverance, has constituted them as a new Israel, led them to a new Sinai, and imposed on them a new Torah to which, by the messianic gift of the Spirit, they are enabled to give spontaneous and glad obedience. I cannot but feel that in certain respects Davies has carried his thesis too far. But taken as a whole his work is a real contribution to the clearing up of that dark river-course which we have set ourselves to explore. Recognising as we must that there is not one vital element in Paul's presentation of the faith in which we cannot trace the influence of the Spirit of Jesus, it is with mingled gratitude and awe that we contemplate the debt that the Christian Church, and Christian civilisation owe to the great apostle who was the first fully to integrate the mission and message of Jesus with the revelation given by God to His people Israel, and who so interpreted it in this comprehensive setting that it became a gospel of the grace of God to all mankind.

But when all this has been acknowledged, there remains the question how this Pauline interpretation of the Gospel is related to the Gospel as proclaimed and lived by Jesus. We

may recall that Jesus Himself has a parable about the wine and the wine-skins.

2. How Jesus interpreted the Gospel

We begin by noting the fact that, even in proclaiming his message to the heathen world, Paul represented the Gospel as the fulfilment of the hope of Israel, and interpreted it in the terms of Israel's faith. He had the best possible reason for so doing; Jesus interpreted it so Himself. The whole course of Jesus' public ministry, His attitude to the Law and the Temple, His choice of the Twelve, His action on that last night when He spoke of " the new covenant in My blood "—all these (to say nothing of certain direct statements limiting His mission to Israel) make it perfectly clear that the salvation of Israel was the central and determining purpose of His ministry. But true as this is, it is only part of the truth. Concentration of purpose does not necessarily imply limitation of vision. The God whom Jesus reveals, the God who feeds the ravens and clothes the flowers of the field, the God manifested in nature, is clearly One who, when He comes to deal with His human family, does not allow His loving care to be limited by barriers of race or creed; and in the sphere of human duty the call to men to become as little children, to love their enemies, and to take up their cross daily, represents an obligation which has a relevance for all men, Jew and Gentile alike. Both in His doctrine of God and in His teaching on human responsibility, Jesus, as has been said, "domesticates the absolute ".

To see this in its true light, however, we have to remind ourselves that Jesus is not here appealing to the truths of what might be called " natural religion "; His whole message about God and man represents a " mystery " which only a few at the first are able to receive, so that even the chosen band of disciples constantly fail to understand, and only begin to enter into its meaning after He has given His life for them. And it is because the revelation of this mystery comes as the culmination of a long history of revelation granted to Israel that Jesus has, in the first place, to agonise over Israel, that so in the fulness of time the Gospel may, through Israel, be passed on to those other nations to whom God has been in the main unknown. We must, however, beware of interpreting the message of Jesus

too strictly in relation to His Jewish inheritance and environment, as if these influences determined not merely the form, but even the substance and content, of His message. Meeting as we do now as a band of scholars devoted to the study of the New Testament, have we not to confess that much that passes for " scholarship " is allowed too often to obstruct or distort the vision instead of clarifying it, and that the very materials which we amass for constructive interpretation may be so used as to become " stones of stumbling " and " rocks of offence "? Take for example the expression " the Kingdom of God " as used by Jesus. It had of course a familiar sound and an unmistakable relevance for Jewish listeners; and it is an obvious duty for us as students to-day to understand as fully as we can what the term would have meant to a first-century Jew. But when we have learned all we can, there is one fundamental fact about the term, alongside of which everything else that we can say about it sinks into insignificance. It is that it represents the prophetic proclamation that " God reigns ", with the implication that, being the Living and True God, He is asserting and establishing His divine Sovereignty, however much opposing powers may thwart Him. So interpreted, Jesus' message of the Kingdom of God has an obvious relevance, not merely for those who look for the fulfilment of the hope of Israel, but for the soul of man *qua* man. And alongside of the proclamation of the Sovereignty of God we may set Jesus' insistence on the place which man has in the purposes of God; and in the general light of Jesus' teaching about man I would make bold to plead that the term " Son of Man ", whatever associations it may have come to have through its use in apocalyptic literature, ought on the lips of Jesus to be interpreted as an expression of His faith in the fulfilment of the destiny which from the beginning of time God has planned for man. Jesus is always seeking to get back to first principles, at once fulfilling and transcending the religion of Israel—as a concrete illustration we may cite how, in connexion with the question of divorce, He pierces beyond the law as ordained by Moses to what was the purpose of God in creating mankind, male and female. And it is in accordance with first principles that He declares that the whole duty of man—seen in what we may call its " vertical " and its " horizontal " aspects—may be summed up in the twofold com-

mandment: " Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . and thy neighbour as thyself."

In all this, of course, Paul is perfectly in accord with his Master, however much the forms of expression differ in the two cases. Having truly learned the mind of Jesus, Paul saw with unerring vision that the Gospel must be for the Greek no less than for the Jew. And so, in controversy with his Jewish brethren, he insisted that long before the Law was given to Israel God had made a Promise regarding the blessing that was to come to all nations. But in other circumstances he indulges in even wider vistas, as we see more particularly in his exposition of humanity's need in the opening chapter of Romans. There he insists that, even apart from the special revelation to Israel, there is a knowledge of God available to *all* men from the contemplation of God's created works, and even the heathen may know something of the divine will because of " the law that is written on their hearts ". We need not stay to enquire how far Paul as a Jewish scholar may have been influenced by Rabbinic teaching on the Noachian commandments, recognised as binding on the whole human family that had survived the flood, or on the other hand how far he may have been familiar with analogous Stoic teaching regarding the law of nature. If we are to penetrate to the *fons et origo* of Paul's universalism, we have to get behind the influence of Rabbinic or Hellenistic teaching to the influence of the ministry and teaching of Jesus. Jesus saw all life in the light of the purposes of the eternal God, who at the beginning of creation had made man in His own image, and destined him for a position of lordship; and His mission, though addressed in the first instance to Israel, was directed towards the salvation of the world.

3. How Jesus interpreted His own Mission

This leads us in the next place to consider generally the place accorded to Jesus Himself in the Pauline theology, and to relate Paul's Christology to the corresponding teaching which we find in the Gospels. Paul's whole soul was aflame with the conviction that Jesus, crucified but now exalted to God's right hand, was God's appointed Messiah for the salvation and the judgment not of Israel merely, but of all mankind. We need not be surprised that he interpreted the mission of Jesus in

terms of the Jewish hope of a Messiah. Had he interpreted it in any less exalted terms, he would have missed its true significance. But Paul's attitude on this question of Messiahship gives us only a partial clue to what may have been Jesus' own attitude. The question is often discussed whether Jesus did or did not regard Himself as Messiah. Unless we are careful to preserve a sense of spiritual realities the question may become hopelessly unreal. We can no longer admit the contention of Wrede and others that the attribution of Messiahship to Jesus is entirely to be explained as a development in the primitive Church. Without question Jesus in His own soul—and perhaps even openly at His examination before the high-priest—accepted the role of Messiah so far as the Messiah was the one through whom the hope of Israel was to be fulfilled. But in presenting His claims to His fellows He built on other foundations. His one demand was always, not a credal confession, but an attitude of receptivity and obedience. " Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Moreover in addressing His mission to Israel He saw how Israel itself had a messianic mission to discharge for the salvation of the nations, and His own vocation therefore was to bring a truly messianic Israel into being. These considerations seem to leave room for questioning whether Messiahship was likely to appeal to Jesus as either a perfectly appropriate or a perfectly adequate description of His mission.

There were other more human categories that appealed to Jesus as expressive of His relationship to God and to His fellowman. As His parables show, He likened Himself to a doctor attending to the sick, a steward with a responsibility for his master's estate, a shepherd whose one care was for his sheep; at other times, when He sought to emphasise His authority, He was the king, the king's son, or the judge. His soul was always peculiarly sensitive to the simple necessities of human life—how much of His teaching, for instance, is connected with man's elementary need for food and drink. More particularly, we cannot but be impressed with His frequent use of the image of the Shepherd and the Sheep; and He saw Himself, not just as one shepherd among many, but rather (in the language of the Fourth Gospel) as " the good Shepherd ", what in more

modern phraseology we might call the 100% shepherd, who never in any respect falls short of the highest standards of shepherdhood—leading his sheep to safety, seeing that they are fed, searching for them when they are lost, and if the need arises giving his life for them. And recalling such passages as Jer. 23, 1-6 and Ezek. 34, both of which deal with the ingathering and the feeding of the scattered flock and culminate in a reference to David, may we even go on to ask whether Jesus saw Himself as the Son of David in the sense of fulfilling the divine promise of a Shepherd-King?[1] Was it, for example, as the Shepherd of souls, and as the purveyor of spiritual food, that in the course of His ministry He fed the multitudes, the five thousand and the four thousand, revealing to them something of that mystery of the Gospel which, alas! they failed to understand, and that in the end He gathered the Twelve around the table at the Last Supper, to feed them with His own body and blood? Later, when the Shepherd was smitten and the sheep were scattered, was it still as the Shepherd that He was to go before them into Galilee, where they (the sheep) were to follow behind Him and finally to see Him in His risen power? Alas! it was less as a well-ordered flock than as frightened and scattered sheep that they fled in the end from the Holy City to their northern homeland. But there, as had been promised, they received a revelation of their risen and ever-living Lord; and strengthened now in their conviction of His Messiahship they returned to Jerusalem, where all the training they had received from Him about the reality of the Divine Presence brought forth fruit in their new-found realisation of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

It is not difficult to trace a vital spiritual connexion between such teaching and that which we find in the Pauline doctrine of the Church, according to which the redeemed are "in Christ", living in communion with their crucified and risen Lord. And yet the expression is different. How was it, we may ask in passing, that the picture of Christ as the Shepherd, which is so frequent in other parts of the New Testament, should not appear even once in the Epistles of St. Paul—though according

[1] This thought of the Shepherd-King has recently been developed in a Thesis (not yet published) on "The Theology of St. Mark's Gospel" by the Rev. A. A. Morrison, B.D., Ph.D., of Campsie.

to the narrative of Acts he did make use of it in his address to the elders of the church of Ephesus (Acts 20.28 f.)?

Before we leave this theme, may we go one step further? It was not merely as the new David or Solomon, the new Moses or Elijah, that Jesus confronted man with His challenge; He claimed also to have come among them as the Son of Man. I confess that I find it far from helpful to associate His use of this name with the Book of Enoch, and to regard it as a veiled assertion of Messiahship, with the implication that He may be expected to appear soon in apocalyptic splendour. Ought we not rather to link it up with the Genesis story of the origin and destiny of man, and to trace in it the seed of the teaching of the Church regarding the Christ as the second Adam, the originator or redeemer not simply of a new Israel, but rather of a new order of manhood—teaching which comes to clear expression on occasion in the Pauline Epistles, and seems to underline some other New Testament passages where the reference is not explicit? What we may call a Son of Man Christology is traceable in the outlook of the Hellenist Stephen—not merely in his dying vision of the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God, but also (it may be urged) in the whole development of his apologia as recorded in Acts. So too the Epistle to the Hebrews, representing again a Hellenist Christology, emphasises repeatedly the humanity of the Christ—how He proclaimed the Gospel, overcame temptation, steadfastly faced opposition, learned obedience by the things which He suffered, and despising the shame came in the end through death on a cross to His enthronement at the right hand of God. Such a Christology is of course not incompatible with the Christology of the Pauline Epistles; but it is different in expression, and is more directly in line with the Christology of Jesus as we can trace it in the Gospels.

4. Can we get "Back to Jesus"?

There are many other aspects of our problem which will at once suggest themselves to the minds of serious students. These I must ask leave to pass by. The aim of this address is simply to serve as a direction-post, pointing the way to an enquiry which each succeeding generation of New Testament students must take up afresh.

" From Paul to Jesus "—I have avoided the phrase " the quest of the historical Jesus ", so reminiscent of " old unhappy far-off things and battles long ago ". Yet in part it describes what we are after. It has become customary in some quarters to decry that quest as futile. I do not share that defeatist spirit. Form-criticism, it is true, has taught us not to expect too much, revealing the limitations that inevitably beset our task. But it has carried its negations much too far. Fortunately it has also brought in its train some positive gains. The portrait of Jesus as given in the Gospel reflects, no doubt, the faith of the early Christian communities. But it was *meant* to be taken as an historical portrait; and (though of course abundant room must still be left for critical examination) there is no compelling reason why we should not accept it as such. One of the real gains accruing from recent criticism is that we now have a deeper appreciation of what is meant by " history ", and by " an historical portrait ". Just as we no longer think of the Pauline Epistles as doctrine divorced from history, so we have learned not to expect the Gospels to yield us pure history divorced from doctrine. The process of interpreting the historical facts of the Gospel story did not begin with the early Christians; it began with Jesus Himself. It was not of course incumbent on Him, as it was on St. Paul, to work out a developed Christology. His task was to *live* the messianic life, and to lead others to share it with Him. Nevertheless the Jesus who confronts us in the Gospels clearly wants men to realise that His mission has a meaning: it is a mission that is transcendent, unique and decisive. He has a " mystery " to reveal to those who are able to receive it; and though that mystery concerns in the first place the character and purposes of the Living God, it also concerns the person and mission of Himself as the revealer of it. This mystery of the Gospel He conveys by His life, and even more by His death, to His chosen disciples, so that in this way it becomes a mystery that is revealed. So revealed, it passes on into the faith of the primitive Church. And it comes next to infinitely fuller expression in the gospel and the theology of the great apostle to the Gentiles.

Thus our quest appears to us to-day in a very different light from that in which it appeared to those who were pursuing it a generation or two ago. The enquiry is not simply an

historical one; it is theological. I might even say it is essentially religious—not just a quest of the historical Jesus, but rather an attempt to discover for the world of to-day the vital forces of the Gospel. The Gospel is life and power. It is nothing less than God Himself coming into human life—making His dwelling-place among us, forcing us (in Christ Jesus) to come to grips with the world's evil, and not least with the evil in our own souls, and enabling us to overcome the world and to become heirs of eternal life. But as the message is formulated for us in the New Testament this gift comes to us in earthen vessels—very precious vessels they are, so that we might rather describe them as of alabaster or of gold. But they are vessels none the less; and our duty as students of the New Testament is to open them up, with understanding and reverent care, if only to ensure that, however highly we may value the vessels, we shall continue to set far more store on the precious gift which they contain.

5. The Significance of our Enquiry

As scholars working in a highly specialised field we naturally pursue our task in as objective a spirit as possible, bringing to bear on it all the light that may be helpfully available from any quarter, and seeking with a dispassionate regard for truth to learn what the Scriptures, so read, have to teach us. But it will not be amiss if, in closing, we cast a glance into adjoining fields and reflect, however superficially, on the importance which may belong to our task in its bearing on the life and teaching of the Christian Church, and even on the place of Christianity in the modern world. There are—to take one example—certain modern movements in theology which, in the emphasis which they lay on the revealed Word of God, profess indifference to the earthly life of Him in whom the Word was made flesh, and even dismiss preoccupation with the study of His earthly life as inimical to a living apprehension of the Gospel. So too there are certain tendencies in Christian worship which, while rightly fostering the believer's communion with the Church's exalted Lord, do not ensure that this communion of Spirit is adequately tested and reinforced by constant reference to the experiences which the Lord underwent when He lived as a man among men, sharing to the full in

human suffering and sorrow, tempted in all respects as we are yet without sin, entering into the fight of life as a strong man armed, and triumphing where we fail, that in His strength we may triumph too. There are few expressions of the Christian mystery that are not exposed in some direction to the danger of over- or of under-statement. The tendencies to which I have just referred have this danger, as it seems to me, that they lead so easily in the direction of Gnosticism or Docetism, that they intellectualise the Gospel, or (on the other hand) surround it with an atmosphere of mystification in which the intellect can scarcely breathe at all; and, so presented, the Gospel comes to appear to many, both within the Christian fellowship and more especially outside of it, as unrelated to human life as they themselves have to live it. Some of us here may have, as I do, the solemn responsibility of training candidates for the Christian ministry. I confess that one of the saddest tragedies of the organised Church to-day, as I see it repeated in one parish after another, is that the servant of God who has been set apart to be a preacher of the Gospel, or a steward of the holy mysteries, so often apparently feels no call to go out and in among his people day by day as a representative of the Good Shepherd. It is an honourable responsibility which rests on a society such as ours, to help to make the New Testament a living book for the twentieth century, a true Word of God for our distressed and enslaved generation, bringing near to man at once God's mercy and God's judgment. In that connexion we may find satisfaction in the eager desire now manifesting itself in all the Churches—and not least in the Church of Rome—to have the Scriptures translated into modern speech and to provide helpful aids for their study.

But reflection on these wider issues in regard to which our Society may be helpful will also prompt us, if we are honest with ourselves before God, to remember how many pitfalls and dangers beset us in the task of Biblical interpretation. How easily, for example, the study of the Christian Scriptures may become perverted and lifeless if it is primarily a study of ancient documents, pursued out of relation to the doctrines and the worship of the Christian Fellowship. Have we not to confess, with deep searchings of heart, that the aberrations and negations of Biblical criticism have in the past often served to drive

the official guardians of the faith into positions which to the critical mind seem reactionary? Fortunately, a new day has dawned, a new spirit is abroad. It seems to me a peculiarly good omen that this Society of ours, now in its infancy, was conceived at a gathering of Churchmen from many lands who, in obedience to the call for Christian unity, were giving earnest and prayerful study to questions affecting the Faith and Order of the Church (Edinburgh, 1937). And looking abroad beyond our Society we can see on so many sides how men of goodwill and earnest purpose, both within the Church and outside of it, are seeking to get beyond the things which separate them to the basic things that unite them; and quickened by this desire there is a growing readiness among men to turn again to the New Testament, to learn of Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the Head of a redeemed order of humanity, the living Centre of Creation and of History. In some respects, it is true, the language of the New Testament is strange to them. A generation that has largely lost its sense of the Unseen and Eternal, and construes life chiefly in terms of modern science, does not readily appreciate the religious categories of ancient Israel—an arresting fact which provides an added reason why we should get back to " the living springs ". In such circumstances a Society such as ours, which brings together scholars of many lands and many communions, all united in a pure desire for the truth as it is in Christ, has assuredly an important positive contribution to make in our day to the development of Christian faith and life.

THE PARABLE AND THE PREACHER

by The Rev. R. S. WALLACE

In his endeavour to expound the Parables of Jesus, the preacher who turns for help to the work of modern New Testament scholars will not be disappointed. Certainly the present writer has put himself very much in their debt. At the same time there are rules and definitions by which some modern scholars restrict the understanding of the parables in a way that is often baffling to the preacher. As the parables, however, are peculiarly the domain of the preacher, it would appear that these elements require further discussion and clarification if he is to get full benefit from recent research and do justice to the kerygmatic setting in which we have received the parables.

I

An attempt should be made as consistently as possible to interpret the parables Christologically.[1]

When Jesus spoke in parables He sought to reveal to His hearers the significance of His own Presence in their midst, and the urgency of the critical situation into which His coming has thrown this world. In doing this, He revealed to His contemporaries in the same parables the meaning of whatever attitude they took up in the midst of the situation of crisis which so urgently called for their decision. The key to the interpretation of many of the parables is in our hands when we regard them as challenges, thrown out by Jesus to those who stood before Him, to make a judgment about Himself, to be definite in their attitude and response to His ministry, and to take comfort or warning according to whether they yielded to His appeal or hardened their hearts against Him.

The parables cannot be properly understood unless they are given such a Christological significance. To regard them merely as stories illustrating either general moral truths, or laws of the

[1] This is much emphasised in recent works on the New Testament. Hoskyns and Davey speak of the "Christological penetration of the parables". "The parables . . . are shot through with the same Christological significance as the miracle narratives" (*Riddle of the New Testament*, p. 134). "The parables represent the interpretation which our Lord offered of His own ministry" (C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, p. 197). "They take us into the brunt of His warfare" (A. T. Cadoux, *The Parables of Jesus*, p. 59). "They are parallel in revelational significance to the acts and works of Jesus" (W. Manson, *Jesus the Messiah*, p. 48).

spiritual life, or even the truths and doctrines of the Christian faith, is to miss their vital significance.[1] Jesus spoke in parables because His purpose was to say what could not be said in the way of plain direct speech. The gospel is news of an event that is a " mystery ", the nature of which it is beyond the power of human reason to comprehend. Indeed, the more the believing human mind understands this mystery, the more it is clear that it is a mystery that baffles understanding. The mystery is so deep and many-sided that it cannot be described in plain language or explained in clear logical propositions easily grasped by the minds of men. It is indeed so many-sided that men must be introduced into it by being led first into a world of stories, and by being made familiar with a world of pictorial analogies drawn from life. A man with this imaginative background of stories illustrating now one aspect and now another aspect of the manifold wisdom of God is in a position in which the mystery can lay hold of his mind with power and reality, for it cannot be grasped even in one of its partial aspects unless at the same time there is a realisation of its total significance. The parable thus seems to be, humanly speaking, the most suitable type of expression by which at the time Jesus could expound the mystery of the event which was being enacted before the eyes of His contemporaries, without being hopelessly misunderstood by the minds of men so slow to see the significance of anything new, so quick to interpret any new phenomenon in terms which their naturally logical and materialistic minds could already master.

The manner in which Jesus introduces men into the mystery hidden in the parables is similar to the manner in which He seeks to act upon men in the sacrament, and the relation between the " mystery " which is to be known through the parable

[1] " Was all this wealth of loving observation and imaginative rendering of nature and common life used merely to adorn moral generalities?" (C. H. Dodd, ibid. p. 25). This does not, however, warrant our regarding as not genuine, the interpretations attached to the parables in the Gospels which seem at times on the surface to have little more than mere moral significance. Dibelius, e.g., rejects as out of place the saying at the end of the parable of the Publican and Pharisee: " For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted " (Luke 18.14), saying: " Thereby the parable receives a commonplace ethical meaning which is far removed from its wording " (*From Tradition to Gospel*, Eng. Tr. p. 253). But this disputed phrase cannot be understood on an ethical plane and is obviously full of eschatological significance, the emphasis on which is entirely in place alongside the doctrine of justification by faith taught in the parable.

and the story itself is similar to the relation between the sign and the thing signified in the sacrament.[1] The object of the expositor must therefore be similar to the object of the minister presiding at the celebration of the sacrament. As at the celebration of the Lord's Supper, he seeks to make the participants live again in the midst of the events of the last days of Our Lord in faith that the Living Christ will manifest Himself, so in expounding the parables he must seek as skilfully as he can to draw his hearers into the centre of this world of story, in order that, as they dwell there, the Living Christ may reveal to a mind thus prepared the truth about Himself, and Himself who is the Truth.

Since the purpose of the parabolic teaching of Jesus is to introduce men into this mystery, it is impossible for the significance of the parables to be systematically and fully expounded in plain straightforward speech without the uninitiated hearer becoming almost irritated by tantalising contradictions and paradoxes. Such apparent contradictions and paradoxes could be hidden, and the parables thereby made " simple " only by the preacher making a very partial selection of passages according to a systematic principle alien to the gospel which would result in an exposition robbing the parables of much of their hidden wealth of meaning.

II

Allowance should be made for a consciously forward looking or prophetic element in the parables.

There is a tendency among some scholars to assume that Jesus, in uttering the parables, had no other conscious intention than to refer to the events of His own ministry in the flesh which are covered in the gospel narratives. This can give rise even to an explicit denial of any prophetic element in the parables.[2]

[1] Cf. the following passage from Professor T. W. Manson: " The true parable . . . is not an illustration to help one through a theological discussion; it is rather a mode of religious experience. It belongs to the same order of things as altar and sacrifice, prayer, the prophetic vision, and the like. It is a *datum* for theology, not a by-product. It is a way in which religious faith is attained and, so far as it can be, transmitted from one person to another. It is not a crutch for limping intellects but a spur to religious insight: its object is not to provide simple theological instruction, but to produce living religious faith " (*The Teaching of Jesus*, p. 73).

[2] " . . . The themes are no longer prophetic but messianic. They declare the divine event to be now taking place and the destiny of men to be dependent upon the acceptance or rejection of this event " (Hoskyns and Davey, *Riddle of the New Testament*, p. 133).

Professor C. H. Dodd, for example, with a skill which we cannot but admire, and a result which we must acknowledge to throw fresh light on the text, expounds passages which have been traditionally interpreted as referring to the history of the Church as if they, indeed, have no other reference than to the immediate situation in Palestine during the earthly life of Jesus. He sums up the conviction which dictates this procedure in these words: " It is in this context that the parables of the Kingdom of God must be placed. They use all the resources of dramatic illustration to help men to see that in the events before their eyes—in the miracles of Jesus, His appeal to men and its results, the blessedness that comes to those who follow Him, in the tragic conflict of the cross and the tribulation of the disciples, in the fateful choice before the Jewish people and the disasters that threaten—God is confronting them in His Kingdom, Power and Glory. The world has become the scene of a divine drama in which eternal issues are laid bare. It is the hour of decision. It is realised eschatology."[1]

But the parables make obvious reference to much more than the outward events which took place immediately before the eyes of His contemporaries in the life and death of Jesus. They have a forward look. They prophesy future things. They predict not only an immediate crisis for those who were dealing with Jesus of Nazareth in the flesh, but also an historical process which is to follow His historical life and is to be equally decisive for generations to come. They teach that the period of eschatological tension will be lengthened out and will be followed by a second series of universally decisive events which will complete the revelation already given in the historic life of Jesus. There is no need to cast doubt on the authenticity of those passages in the parables which seem to allow for such a pause in the midst of the eschatological events of the end of the world as will allow for the rise and history of the organisation of the Church as we have known it. It is true that the whole atmosphere into which we are introduced in the parables is heavy with the expectancy of an immediate world-shaking crisis. The parables proclaim to us that in the history of Jesus the drama of the end of the world has opened. The beginning of the end has been made. But in the historical circumstances

[1] *The Parables of the Kingdom*, p. 197.

of the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus only the first act of that drama has been unfolded. There are other acts to follow, and the course of the whole drama is foreshadowed in prophecy by Jesus in the parables.

The significance of the parables, therefore, cannot be fully understood by giving them the circumscribed reference in the mind of Jesus which the doctrine of realised eschatology seems to dictate. The full eschatological tension under which the original hearers of the parables lived, has not yet been released. The parables were originally designed to refer to our present situation no less than to the situation of the Jew of the first generation A.D. The events and processes described in the parables are taking place before our eyes in as challenging and concrete a manner as before the eyes of the contemporaries of Jesus. The ministry of the word and sacrament is producing in the world the same critical situation as the historic ministry of Jesus in Palestine in His day. The whole sphere of world history is to-day being disturbed by Jesus Christ, and men and nations are being judged by their reaction to Him in the same way as the Jewish nation was disturbed and judged by its reaction to Him in the days of His flesh. There is a direct and conscious prophecy of all this in the parabolic teaching of Jesus.

It must be admitted that Dr. C. H. Dodd allows for the reinterpretation of the parables in terms of the situation in which the Church finds itself at varied times. " Their teaching ", he writes, " may be fruitfully applied and re-applied to all sorts of new situations which were never contemplated at the time when they were spoken." But this means that no reference from the parables to our modern situation can have any authority other than resides in our own imagination. Reading the parables as they stand, it seems obvious that the outline of the Church and the form and nature of its ministry were contemplated by Jesus and deliberately foreshadowed in His parabolic teaching. We must not allow our criticism of the New Testament, and our decision as to what can be accepted as genuinely coming from the mouth of Jesus, to be dictated by a very one-sided Christology which does not leave room for some measure of consciousness in the mind of our Lord covering the nature of future historical developments in the sphere of history affected by His Word.

III

The exposition should not be limited by any restricted definition of the word *Parable*.

A parable is often defined as a simile, which may be lengthened out into a similitude or a story, in which some event or situation or process is described in terms which hold the imagination and stimulate the mind into forming a judgment upon the situation thus depicted. In making this judgment, the hearer is at the same time forced by the skill of the narrator of the parable, possibly in some concluding home-thrust, to see that he himself is in an analogous situation in some other field of experience, and that through the parable he has really made a judgment about his own situation which, thus made, must now affect his conduct. The parabolic form is thus designed to force the hearer into a desired decision. The illustration often given as typical of the true parable form is the story told by Nathan to David about the man who owned the one ewe lamb stolen so cruelly by the powerful rich man. David on hearing this story formed his judgment in indignation against the rich man whereupon Nathan said, " Thou art the man! " and David could not escape the relevance of his judgment on the story to his own situation.

The parable is thus, in its descriptive aspect, true to life as men know it in the world, and built round one fairly simple main theme. Indeed, it must be such if it is to lead to a convincing judgment on the situation described. Any large measure of unlikelihood or fantasy about the story, or any overloading with detail which might distract attention from the one point on which judgment is to be made, would have the effect of destroying the true parabolic form according to this definition.

It will be seen that the parable as thus defined is a form of discourse quite distinct from another form of literary expression which we call the " allegory ". An allegory is also often shaped in the form of a story, but the story in an allegory can be highly imaginative and untrue to life because the story must be shaped in every detail according to the hidden meaning which the narrator is seeking to convey. Each feature, detail and character in the story stands for some significant feature in the field

of experience in which it is desired to teach the lesson, and the action is made to move, not according to real life but according to the trend of the didactic purpose. Whereas a parable is normally designed to compel decision, an allegory is designed rather to describe and instruct, though in certain spheres such instruction is bound to lead to decision. And whereas one parable is designed mainly to enforce one lesson, one allegory may teach varied lessons, the more lessons taught the more ingenious the work of the author.

As an example of allegory we may take any typical excerpt from *The Pilgrim's Progress*, such as the incident in which Giant Despair meets Christian and Hopeful in By-Path Meadow, and locks them up in Doubting Castle where, after lying some days in a stinking dungeon, Christian suddenly remembers that in his bosom he has a key called Promise which is able to unlock any door in their prison and bring them deliverance from Despair.

With these definitions and examples before us, we have to decide whether, in interpreting the parables of Jesus, we have to treat them strictly as parables according to the definition above outlined, or whether they can at any point be made the subject of allegorical interpretation.

There are those who, following the lead given by Adolf Jülicher in his important work on the parables at the end of last century, go the length of asserting that there was originally almost no allegorical material in the parables of Jesus. "Jülicher showed not that the allegorical interpretation is in this and that case overdone or fanciful, but that the parables in general do not admit of this method at all", writes Dr. C. H. Dodd,[1] for whom the parables of Jesus are all strictly parables according to the definition indicated above, and must be interpreted as such.

Such a theory leads to the application of a most severe critical treatment to many of the parables with devastating results. For those who hold this view are compelled to say that many of the details of the parables as they have been handed down to us were not originally spoken by Jesus and must be cut out if we are to get at the true meaning He wished originally to convey. Any details which tend to make the parables to the least extent complicated in structure, or which carry by themselves an obvious metaphorical significance, are treated with

[1] *The Parables of the Kingdom*, p. 13.

suspicion and often branded as spurious. And any action on the part of the characters in the parables unlikely to be true to life likewise warrants the same treatment.[1] Those holding such a theory are also compelled to say that the allegorical interpretations which are attached to the parables of the Sower and the Tares in the gospels were not originally spoken by Jesus and are additions to the text by the evangelists who misunderstood the nature of a true parable.

This theory under discussion, moreover, also gives rise to an extremely restricted method of interpretation which seems bound to result in a type of exposition which (in words applied to some earlier expositors who deserved them less) " would leave the parables bare trunks, stripped of all their foliage and branches, of everything which makes for beauty and ornament ".[2] It is not, strictly speaking, allowable on this theory to dwell on the significance of the far country or of any of the miseries of the prodigal as detailed in the story in Luke's gospel. It is not allowable to speculate as to what Jesus might have meant by such details as the " talents ", or " exchangers ", or " lamps ", or " wedding garments ".[3] All that is legitimate is

[1] Dr. A. T. Cadoux, e.g. (*The Parables of Jesus*, p. 66 ff.) approves of the rejection of a large part of the parable of the Pounds because the action of the returning king is not true to life, and the conclusion of the episode detracts attention from the main thread of the story: likewise of the conclusion of the parable of the Ten Virgins because (quoting Dr. M'Neile " an earthly bridegroom would hardly act or speak thus ".

[2] Trench, *Notes on the Parables*, p. 35.

[3] " The typical parable whether it be a simple metaphor, or a more elaborate similitude, or a full length story, presents one single point of comparison. The details are not meant to have independent significance " (C. H. Dodd, ibid. p. 18). Even in short parables where one of the main details seems to cry out for an obvious allegorical or twofold interpretation, there is a strange unwillingness to allow for such. Thus, in discussing the parable of the barren Fig Tree, Dr. T. W. Manson sets aside any attempt to elaborate the interpretation by saying: " It is meant to teach one lesson only, the need for timely repentance; and there is no profit in turning it into an allegory " (*Mission and Message of Jesus*, p. 566), but Jesus' action in cursing the fig tree invites such an allegorical interpretation which can undoubtedly be applied with much profit. In the parable of the Salt, Jülicher (see A. T. Cadoux, ibid. p. 52) insists that the only point of comparison which should be dwelt upon is the contrast between the value and worthlessness of the respective types of salt. But if Jesus had no intention that His hearers' minds should not also dwell on the taste and preservative power of salt and bring these qualities into the comparison, would He not have chosen quite a different simile with which to enforce His one lesson without ambiguity? It is obvious that this insistence on " one point only " breaks down when we consider a parable like that of the Prodigal Son (see M. Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel*, p. 255). " So long as the story of the parable is not unnaturally shaped into similarity with the features of the field to which it is applied, so long as points of similarity grow naturally from the story, they may be multiplied with advantage " (A. T. Cadoux, ibid. p. 51),

that we should find out the one point in the story about which judgment is called for, and in order to give this one point its proper emphasis, suppress any inclination to attach any meaning to the rich details which have exercised such a fatal and regrettable fascination upon so many generations of expositors.

The present writer does not feel that the type of criticism dictated by the theory under discussion is justified, or that the type of exposition to which it gives rise can indicate the best routes for the traveller to take, who would explore the heart of the mystery and beauty and wealth hidden in the world of parables of Jesus. The theory seems to merit the utterance of another parable calling for judgment on the folly of a man who tied up his legs tightly with rope and then sat impoverished and hungry because he could not walk.

It must be recognised, however, that a clear recognition of the distinction above drawn between " parable " and " allegory " is helpful to the expositor, for there is no doubt that the key to the meaning of a large number of the parables of Jesus is found most readily when they are approached on the assumption that they are, in the main, parabolic in form and intention. But we must not be restricted in our interpretation by any rigid definition of form. Nothing seems more obvious than that the parabolic teaching of Jesus was originally shot through with passages and references which warrant allegorical interpretations. Jesus " made frequent use of metaphor ", writes D. W. H. Moulton, " and if He expanded comparison into parable is it unwarrantable to assume that accordingly, metaphor might be so extended as to become virtually an allegory? "[1] The form Jesus used when He spoke " in parables " is well described by Dr. Martin Dibelius as of a " narrative class, hovering between parable and allegory ".[2]

[1] In article on *Parable*, Hasting's *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*.

[2] *From Tradition to Gospel*, p. 256. See also Hoskyns and Davey, *Riddle of the New Testament*, for a similar judgment. " Nice as is the distinction between allegory and similitude, it normally exists only in theory. In practice most allegories contain simile and most similitudes are tinged with metaphor. . . . If interpretation s to avoid becoming completely arbitrary and prejudiced, it must attempt to explain the existence of both these elements in the material as it stands " (p. 129). Dr. A. T. Cadoux is less willing to concede this point. " Sometimes . . . there is a persistence in metaphor that borders on allegory but never quite reaches it " (ibid. p. 58). Surely a " persistence in metaphor " is precisely an allegory.

IV

While keeping in mind what has been already said, the preacher, in his exposition of the parables, should also be ruled by certain other fairly obvious considerations.

(1) The context in which the parable is placed in the gospel will often give an indication of the meaning it is meant to convey. It has been pointed out already that the parables are, where possible, to be interpreted in the light of the critical situation in which they were uttered. In many cases, of course, we have no indication of the conditions under which the parable had its origin. In such cases it is sometimes profitable to imagine some possible context in the life of Our Lord to which the parable might belong.

In some cases there are sayings attached to the parable, either by the deliberate intention of Jesus, or by the evangelist in sorting out the evangelical material before him. These sayings often give more help in understanding the meaning of the parable than is commonly acknowledged amongst critics. It is not necessary to suppose that the sayings referred to teach the main lesson which the parable is designed to enforce. The main lesson might be so obvious to the awakened mind that it does not require any extra enforcement, and the attached saying may be there to teach some subsidiary lesson that might be less obvious.

(2) The doctrine which we read into the parables, since they belong to the more obscure parts of Scripture, must be in conformity with the teaching of those parts of Scripture that are more clear in expression.

It may be helpful, in our thinking about this matter of the interpretation of the parables, to make use of the once familiar distinction between the " clear " and the " obscure " parts of Scripture. Augustine describes in the following passage our method of procedure in the interpretation of the Bible. " Among the things that are plainly laid down in Scripture are to be found all matters that concern faith and the manner of life-hope, to wit, and love, of which I have spoken in a previous book. After this, when we have made ourselves to a certain extent familiar with the language of Scripture, we may proceed to open up and investigate the obscure passages, and in doing so draw examples from the plainer expressions to throw light

upon the more obscure."[1] Augustine would no doubt have regarded the parables as coming under the category of passages " obscured by metaphorical expressions ", and his advice on the approach to their interpretation is most sound. It is necessary, in interpreting the parables, to read some meaning into them. We will not otherwise find a key to their teaching. The meaning we read into the parables must be dictated by the doctrine taught by the rest of Scripture. It will thus be seen that, though the parables may be used, in a sacramental manner, by the living Spirit of Christ to lead men to faith in Him, they nevertheless cannot be used with much benefit to prove Christian doctrine. They may be used, however, to illustrate or confirm doctrines otherwise reached. Certain dull and difficult theological treatises could be greatly lightened and illuminated by illustrations from the parables.

Moreover the parables may be used to test theology. One of the most searching tests we can apply to any theology is to see whether it can take the parables and, by interpreting them consistently with its main positions, fill their whole content with meaning. No theology that does not find itself at home in the world of the parables is worth much consideration. " It is good evidence," wrote Trench, " that we have discovered the right meaning of a parable, if it leaves none of the main circumstances unexplained. . . . If we have the right key in our hand, not merely some of the words, but all, will have their corresponding parts; the key too will turn without grating or overmuch forcing."[2] It is equally good evidence that we have the right theology if it can give us without such forcing the key that allows us widespread access into the world of the parables.

(3) It must also be kept in mind that each parable, even with its admixture of allegorical material, has a homiletic as well as an artistic unity. This can be of assistance in the inter-

[1] *On Christian Doctrine* II, IX (Marcus Dods' Translation). Augustine in the same treatise makes a most illuminating suggestion as to why there are such metaphorical passages in the Scripture. " It is pleasanter to have knowledge communicated through figures, and what is attended with difficulty in the seeking gives greater pleasure in the finding. For those who seek but do not find suffer hunger. Those, again, who do not seek at all because they have what they require just beside them, grow languid from satiety. . . . Accordingly the Holy Spirit has, with admirable wisdom and care for our welfare, so arranged the Holy Scriptures as by the plainer passages to satisfy our hunger, and by the more obscure to stimulate our appetite. For almost nothing is dug out of those obscure passages which may not be found set forth in the plainest language elsewhere " (II, VI).

[2] *Notes on the Parables*, p. 40.

pretation. Jesus was not diffuse when He discoursed, and any interpretation of the parable which results in an exposition where the thought is not orderly and closely connected is probably wrong. The expositor must resist the temptation to give meaning to details that cannot be closely related to the central theme. Chrysostom, in his exposition of the parable of the Tares, points out that Jesus did not in His explanation tell the disciples who the " servants " were, this being but a detail not to be interpreted since it is " brought in . . . for the sake of some order and to make up the picture ",[1] and he adds the warning, " the parables must not be explained throughout word for word, since many absurdities will follow ".

Though there is but one closely connected messsage in each parable, however, this does not mean that there are not many points in this one message. If the expositor, in following out the main drift of the argument, can by the way suggest for varied details a meaning that does not side-track the argument nor withdraw the hearers' attention from the main lesson to be taught, then he is at liberty to do so. " It must be allowed," says Tholuck, " that a similitude is perfect in proportion as it is on all sides rich in applications; and hence, in treating the parables of Christ, the expositor must proceed on the assumption that there is import in every single point, and only desist from seeking it when either it does not result without forcing, or when we can clearly see that this or that circumstance was merely added for the sake of giving intuitiveness to the narrative. We should not assume anything to be non-essential, except when by holding it fast as essential, the unity of the whole is marred and troubled."[2]

[1] *Homilies on St. Matthew*, 47. Calvin agrees with this judgment. " Comparisons must not be too closely or too exactly carried out so as to apply at all points " (Commentary on *Harm. Ev.* on Matt. 18.2). Adam Clarke admits, in his attempt at a Christological interpretation of one of the parables, that " this parable cannot go on all fours in the Christian cause as anyone may see " (*Comm. on Matt.* 21.33 ff.).

[2] Quoted by Trench, ibid. p. 37. Chrysostom would not allow quite so much freedom to interpret details. " Neither is it right to enquire curiously into all things in the parables word by word, but when we have learned the object for which it was composed, to reap this, and not to busy one's self about anything further " (*Homily on Matthew*, 64). Since it seems on the surface that by this rule he would be wholeheartedly on the side of Dr. C. H. Dodd, it may be pointed out that Chrysostom frequently approves of allegorical interpretations, e.g. by the virgins' lamps is signified the purity of holiness and by the oil, humanity, almsgiving, succour to the needy. Even Calvin, the most restrained of the older commentators where allegory is concerned, though he will not allow any speculation

It follows from this that we should never attempt to decide the meaning of any allegorical detail in a parable in abstraction from the whole parable. In deciding what any feature might stand for, we must first of all take into account its relation to other details and to the whole parable.[1] Dr. W. J. Moulton, in interpreting the parable of the Fig Tree,[2] points out that all the dwellers in Palestine knew that the bursting buds and tender shoots of the fig tree gave unmistakable indication that the summer was at hand. So Jesus teaches in this parable that with equal certainty the nearness of the *Parousia* may be inferred from the signs that precede its coming. Then Dr. Moulton adds a sentence that could be applied in many cases as a most helpful principle of interpretation. " There is here no thought of the resemblance of details, as, for example, between the Summer and the *Parousia*. . . . The likeness is one of relationships and not of details."[3] The analogies which we are mainly to look for in the Parables are dynamic analogies of relationships between features, analogies of movement and action. As one feature of the parable is related to another, so God is related to the sinner or to the saved; or so the Kingdom of God is related to this world. In following out such a rule, the element of allegory, though by no means excluded from the interpretation, will nevertheless be kept in its due place.

(4) It is natural to expect that some of the metaphors used in the parables will be similar to the metaphors used in the Old Testament. Jesus was speaking to an audience who were familiar with the meaning which certain terms such as " light ", " vineyard ", " harvest ", had in the Old Testament Scriptures; and it is likely that Jesus in choosing figures which already had such currency would give the chosen terms similar significance to what is given to them in the Old Testament.[4]

on such minute details as e.g. the oil in the lamps of the virgins which, he holds, has nothing to do with the design of the parable, nevertheless goes as far as to place an allegorical interpretation on the winepress and the tower in the parable of the Wicked Husbandmen (though it is significant that he refuses to interpret the meaning of the hedge).

[1] e.g. to decide what " leaven " means in the parable by reference to its O.T. usage, and not to its relations within the parable, is to miss the point.

[2] Mark 13.28.

[3] See article in Hasting's *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels* on *Parable*.

[4] Yet even here we cannot make a rigid rule. Leaven in the O.T. is used to designate evil, and Jesus uses it in this sense in Luke 13.2. But in the parable it is obviously used with quite another meaning. " The same word does not always signify the same thing ", says Augustine, pointing out that a lion stands for Christ

(5) In interpreting the parables we must recognise that they have an elasticity that enables them to fit the manifold and developing situation of the Church in every generation. It may be quite legitimate for example in the same exposition, to give to one detail two different interpretations. For instance, in the parable of the sower it is obvious that the sower stands for Jesus Himself, but it is equally true that the sower stands for the preacher of the Word, and it would be very foolish to say that one interpretation excludes the other. " What more liberal and more fruitful provision could God have made in regard to the Sacred Scriptures," asks Augustine, " than that the same words might be understood in several senses?"; and his further remarks on this subject are again well worth quoting at length. " If a man searching the Scriptures endeavours to get at the intention of the author through whom the Holy Spirit spake, whether he succeeds in this endeavour or whether he draws a different meaning from the words, but one that is not opposed to sound doctrine, he is free from blame so long as he is supported by the testimony of some other passage of Scripture. For the author perhaps saw that this very meaning lay in the words which we are trying to interpret; and assuredly the Holy Spirit, who through him spake these words, foresaw that this interpretation would occur to the reader, nay made provision that it should occur to him, seeing that it too is founded on truth."[1]

V

It is necessary now to speak about the interpretation of the difficult passage in Mark 4, verses 11 and 12. " And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable. And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: that seeing

(Rev. 5.5) and for the Devil (1 Pet. 5.8), that the word Serpent can be used in a good sense (Matt. 10.6) and in a bad sense (2 Cor. 11.3), likewise the term " Bread " (cf. John 6.51 and Prov. 9.17) (*On Christian Doctrine*, 3.25).

[1] *On Christian Doctrine*, 2.27. The grave dangers of allowing such wide scope for interpretation will no doubt occur to the reader. " There is no parable or detail of parable that has not received many and conflicting interpretations. The Judge of Luke 18.2, e.g., according to some stands for God, and according to others for the devil " (Moulton). But that there are so many foolish interpretations is no reason for unduly restricting the wise. This rule must be taken in conjunction with all the other considerations that have already been laid down.

they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them."

" Every real parable ", writes Professor T. W. Manson, " is significant in two ways. It has its own meaning as a story, and a further meaning—and this is the important thing—by application to persons and events or both together. It is possible for a hearer to follow and appreciate the former meaning without having the slightest inkling of the latter."[1] This is true. Men, hearing the parables, can take from them a great variety of moral lessons (and even at the same time some very " spiritual " lessons too!), and they may go away satisfied with the lessons learned, but they may at the same time have missed completely all that the parable had to say about the Kingdom of God. The lessons they learned, however spiritual, have not risen above the natural level of man's life. They have " seen " yet they have not " perceived "; they have " heard " yet have not " understood ".

When we ask why it is so difficult to rise from such a natural level of thought and deduction and perception in the world of the parables to the level of the Mystery of the Kingdom of God, the only reason we can give is that there is no direct relation between the earthly analogy and the thing it is intended to point to, any more than exists between the sign and the thing signified in the sacrament, or indeed between the two natures in the God-man. If we start first with the human analogy and try on a basis of supposed natural continuity to work upwards to the spiritual counterpart, we are undertaking a labour that is in vain.[2] Unless a man is first inside the Kingdom of God, he

[1] *The Teaching of Jesus*, p. 65.

[2] Professor C. H. Dodd asserts that there is a natural relation here rather than the sacramental relation. " There is a reason for this realism in the parables of Jesus," he writes. " It arises from the conviction that there is no mere analogy but an inward affinity, between the natural order and the Spiritual order " (*The Parables of the Kingdom*, p. 22). It is not surprising that Dr. Dodd, holding such a view, rejects as not genuine the passage under discussion from Mark 4 (though he also gives linguistic reasons for this rejection). If such a natural affinity existed between the two realms then it would indeed be a very easy matter to get at the heart of the " Mystery ", and fewer books on the parables would be necessary. It is interesting that here Professor Dodd is in wholehearted agreement with Trench who also speaks of a harmony between the two realms " unconsciously felt by all men ", of the type and the thing typified as " belonging to one another by an inward necessity ", and as " linked together by the law of a secret affinity " (*Notes on the Parables*, pp. 13-14). But Trench at least qualifies his assertion by the word " secret ", and he goes on to suggest that it is solely because of the redeeming

cannot see the true relevance of the analogies in the parables. The parables can only be understood from above downwards, but not from underneath upwards. " Except a man be born from above he cannot see the Kingdom of God." This saying of Jesus applies with much relevance to the problem of the interpretation and understanding of the parables. Just as there can be no true knowledge of God from outside the redeeming life of God, so there can be no understanding of the Kingdom of God from outside that Kingdom, and thus no understanding of the parables to " those that are without ".[1] This is why, in the words of Matthew Henry, " a parable like the pillar of cloud and fire, turns a dark side towards Egyptians which confounds them, but a light side towards Israelites which comforts them, and so answers a double intention."[2] The parables thus test men, and it is the hearer himself who by his attitude to the parable reveals whether he is within or outside the Kingdom of God. It must never be forgotten, however, that the main purpose with which Jesus spoke His parables was that those who are meek and lowly in heart might find rest for their souls, and that if they have the effect of offending men and dividing men, it is, like all the judgments of God, their " strange work ".

purpose of God that the realm of nature and society has been made to foreshadow the realm of the Kingdom of God. Professor Dodd has no such qualifications to his statement of this doctrine.

[1] " The hiding of the meaning of the parables is the same as the hiding of divine truth from the wise and prudent and the revealing of it to babes. The parables declare ' things hidden from the foundation of the world '. . . . But it is always ' he that hath ears to hear, let him hear '." (A. G. Hebert, *The Authority of the Old Testament*, p. 231.)

[2] *Commentary on Matt.* 13.13 f. Trench ascribes this saying to Thomas Fuller but Matthew Henry makes no such acknowledgment.

CALVIN'S CONCEPT OF REVELATION

by The Rev. T. H. L. PARKER

I

The Revelation of God the Creator

The *Institutes* is a long and detailed essay upon the knowledge of God, not a well-constructed and comprehensive system of theology, a kind of Reformed *Summa Theologica*. It was this problem of the knowledge of God which constituted the real disagreement with Rome, and in the *Institutes* Calvin works out from the Scriptures the Reformed doctrine of the knowledge of God to stand in opposition to the contemporary and scholastic Roman doctrine based upon the synthesis of the Scriptures and Greek philosophy. When once this is understood, the different doctrines treated in the book fall easily into their places in relation to the central theme, the knowledge of God.

The procedure he adopts, however, is striking. He does not begin by laying down a philosophy of knowledge; he does not even talk a great deal about the knowledge of God; instead he occupies himself in the first two books with the doctrine of revelation. For him the problem of the knowledge of God is the problem of revelation. This is true in varying degrees of all Christian theologians, from the Apologists or Clement of Alexandria at one extreme to Calvin or Barth at the other. To know God we need the revelation of God; and since to deny revelation would be to deny Christ, a theologian must perforce hold to revelation in at least some degree if he is to retain the name of Christian. For Calvin, however, knowledge demands revelation to the degree that it cannot exist without revelation.

We must first consider the reason for this before going on to consider the revelation of the Creator in creation and providence, its validity, the revelation in the Scriptures and its relation to this other revelation, and finally, what is learned of God the Creator from His word and His works.

To say that God is incomprehensible is to say what had

always been said (but again, with varying emphases) by Fathers and Schoolmen. But in what way is God incomprehensible? We are not now considering the blindness caused by sin, since the link between knowledge and revelation does not primarily depend upon redemption: " It is thus to be held, that from the beginning of the world there has been no communication of God with men except by the mediation of His eternal Wisdom or Son " (*Comm. in Gal.* 3.19). Even before his Fall, Adam knew God by revelation, by God, otherwise incomprehensible, making Himself known to him. For not only does He exceed the grasp of our minds—" our senses cannot attain to the loftiness of God " (*Comm. in Ps.* 86.8)—but the difference between God and us is such that, sin apart, we are of too lowly estate to come into His presence except by a Mediator: " Although man had stood undefiled without any spot, yet was his estate too base to attain to God without a Mediator " (*Inst.* 2.12.1). He is incomprehensible in the second place because to have laid Himself open to the scrutiny of any who cared to investigate His Person and His Nature would have been to have surrendered Himself and therefore His freedom to the will of His creatures, and hence to cease to be the Lord of man. Whereas the former reason adduced for God's incomprehensibility arose from a difference of natures, this is a deliberate self-withdrawal of God, designated by Calvin, as by Luther, by the term " hidden " (*absconditus*): " For God Himself would lie concealed and deeply hidden from us "[1] (*Inst.* 3.2.1). " For how may the mind of man by his capacity define the immeasurable essence of God, which never yet could certainly determine how great is the body of the sun which yet he daily seeth with his eyes? Yea, how may she by her own guiding attain to discuss the substance of God, that cannot reach to know her own substance? Wherefore let us willingly give over unto God the knowledge of himself. For he only, as Hilary saith, is a convenient witness to himself (*idoneus sibi testis est*), who is not known but by himself (*Hilar. lib. pri. de Trinitate*). We shall give it over unto him, if we shall both conceive him to be such as he hath revealed himself unto us, and shall not elsewhere search to know of him, than by his own word " (*Inst.* 1.13.21). Even apart from sin therefore, God, being in Himself incomprehensible by reason

[1] " Quia Deus ipse procul absconditus lateret,"

of His transcendence and voluntary hiddenness, is known only by Himself. Revelation is thus necessarily prevenient to any knowledge of God.

The self-manifestation of God the Creator takes place primarily in His works—that is, in the creation of the universe and in providence. The conception that has grown up of Calvin as an enemy to all beauty, a somewhat morose pilgrim averting his eyes from the loveliness of the world through which he must pass, has only been able to exist in conjunction with ignorance of his writings. Time and again he reverts to the praises of the God who created the world not merely useful—a fit abode for man—but also beautiful. "We perceive the world with our eyes, tread the earth with our feet, feel with our hands the unnumbered species of the works of God; from the herbs and flowers we breathe a sweet and joyous scent, and we enjoy immense benefits. But in these very things of which we have knowledge there resides the infinity of divine power, goodness, and wisdom, which engrosses all our senses"[1] (*Comm. in Gen. Argumentum*). But if he praises the beauty and wonders of the world, he is still more moved by the majesty of the heavens. (This characteristic attitude, of Calvin contemplating with uplifted eyes the stars, is a parable of his religious attitude also.) "He only makes mention of the heavens; but under this part of creation, which is the noblest, and the excellency of which is more conspicuous, he doubtless includes by synecdoche the whole fabric of the world. There is certainly nothing so obscure or contemptible, even in the smallest corners of the earth, in which some marks of the power and wisdom of God may not be seen; but as a more distinct image of him is engraven on the heavens, David has more particularly selected them for contemplation, that their splendour might lead us to contemplate all parts of the world. When a man, from beholding and contemplating the heavens, has been brought to acknowledge God, he will learn also to reflect upon and to admire his wisdom and power as displayed on the face of the earth, not only in general, but even in the minutest plants"

[1] "Oculis quidem mundum cernimus, pedibus calcamus terram, manibus palpamus innumeras operum Dei species, odorem ex herbis et floribus suavem iucundumque haurimus, fruimur ingentibus bonis: sed in his ipsis quorum notitiam apprehendimus, inest ea divinae potentiae, bonitatis, sapientiae infinitas, quae sensus omnes nostros absorbeat."

(*Comm. in Ps.* 19.1). Yet magnificent as are the heavens and lovely the earth, there is an even higher example of God's handiwork—man, " . . . as it were the outstanding example of the divine wisdom, justice and goodness "[1] (*Comm. in Gen.* 1.26). In his soul immortal; in his mind noble; most exquisite in the fashioning of his body. " They see that exquisite workmanship in all their members. . . . But especially the so swift motions, the so excellent powers, the so rare gifts of the soul, do represent a divine nature that doth not easily suffer itself to be hid " (*Inst.* 1.5.4).

Calvin is no naturalist, however. For him the creation has no meaning apart from its Creator. When he admires it, it is as the work of God. He cannot be satisfied with the creation, but must let it speak to him of the Creator. He lays it down as a principle that we can only know God through His works: " We do not know God, who is invisible, except from His works "[2] (*Comm. in Gen. Argumentum*). And this is so because the works of God are the self-manifestation of the Creator. We must support this with a few quotations, since there prevails some doubt on the matter, owing to the unfortunate use of Calvin in the Barth-Brunner controversy, from which some English partisans seem to have gathered either that the revelation in the works of God supplies most of our needs, or that Calvin denied any such revelation entirely: " He so reveals Himself in all the workings of the world, and daily makes Himself evident, that the eye is unable to perceive without being compelled to regard Him "[3] (*Inst.* 1.5.1). " For the symmetry of the world serves as a mirror, in which we may contemplate the otherwise invisible God "[4] (*Inst.* 1.5.1). " If the question of His essence be raised, He dwells in inaccessible light; but while He irradiates the whole world with His glory, this is the vesture in which, in a manner, He appears to us who in Himself was hidden "[5] (*Comm. in Ps.* 104.1). " Since He is

[1] " . . . eximium quoddam inter alias creaturas divinae sapientiae, iustitiae, et bonitatis specimen."

[2] " Deum, qui invisibilis est, nonnisi ex suis operibus cognoscimus."

[3] " Ita se patefecit in toto mundi opificio, ac se quotidie palam offert, ut aperire oculos nequeant quin aspicere eum cogantur."

[4] " Nobis vice speculi sit tam concinna mundi positio, in quo invisibilem alioqui Deum contemplari liceat."

[5] " Si de essentia eius agitur, habitat certe lucem inaccessam: sed dum irradiat totum mundum suo fulgore, haec vestis est in qua visibilis quodammodo nobis apparet qui in seipso erat absconditus,"

manifested to us in His works, it is right that we should seek Him there "[1] (*Catéchisme de Genève*). These quotations could be vastly multiplied from the *Institutes*, Commentaries, Sermons and opuscula.

In what sense, however, is the creation the self-manifestation of God? It is, as we have already seen, the work of God (*opus dei*), or more specifically, the working of God (*opificium dei*), which, as such, bears impressed upon it the signs of the workmanship of its maker (*opifex*): " He engraves unmistakable signs of His glory on individual works "[2] (*Inst.* 1.5.1). These *certae notae* consist in the beauty, skilful arrangement and usefulness of the creation, which Calvin calls the image of God, or a mirror in which God is seen, or even *effigies dei*. While the three terms are not synonymous, they represent a single well-defined idea in Calvin's mind. The universe is a mirror in which is to be seen the *effigies dei*, or in other words, it is the image of God. Now *effigies dei* is equivalent to the *certae notae* of His glory which God has engraven on His workmanship. Thus, in creating the universe, God—who, it must be remembered, need not have left these *notae* upon His work, for they are a deliberate self-manifestation, and not like the adventitious evidences that enable us to " place " a poem or a concerto—made it a representation of Himself, though in what sense " Himself " is to be read we shall leave to the end. In other words, God reveals Himself in His works.

Another metaphor used of the creation is that it is the garment of God, by which He may be seen, the " visible apparel " of the invisible God: " For God—by other means invisible, as we have already said—clothes Himself, so to speak, with the image of the world, in which He would present Himself to our contemplation " (*Comm. in Gen. Argumentum*). Luther also uses the same figure, but in a far more imaginative way: " Hence, he who would contemplate such mighty things in safety and without danger, must confine himself in all simplicity within those representations, signs, and veils, of the Divine majesty—his word and his works. For it is in his word and his works that he discovers himself unto us; and such as attain unto the knowledge of these are like the woman labouring under the

[1] " Puisqu'il s'est manifesté à nous par ses oeuvres, il faut bien que nous le cherchions en elles."

[2] " Singulis operibus suis certas gloriae suae notas insculpsit."

issue of blood—healed by touching these hems of his garment. Those, on the other hand, who strive to reach God without these veils and coverings, attempt to scale heaven without a ladder, that is, without the word, and in so doing, are overwhelmed by the majesty of God, which they vainly endeavour to comprehend, and fall and perish" (Luther: *Comm. in Gen.* 1.2). Moreover, Luther asserts clearly and forcibly the paradox that God, in revealing Himself, conceals Himself; that the revealed God is the hidden God (*Deus revelatus est Deus absconditus*): "It is absolutely necessary that when God reveals Himself to us, He should do so under some veil of representation, some shadowing manifestation, and should say, 'Behold, under this veil thou shalt surely discover me'" (ibid.). This note is hardly sounded by Calvin, who considers revelation in a more direct manner, as the making known, not indeed of God's incomprehensible essence, but of His will regarding us. Therefore he uses frequently as synonyms for revelation the group of words meaning "to shine"—*fulgere*, *lucere* and their compounds.

The expression "works of God" (*opera dei*) refers not only to the creation, but also to providence. In His continual ruling of all events, both great and small, God may be perceived as clearly as in His creative activity: God "hath so disclosed himself in the whole workmanship of the world, and daily so manifestly presenteth himself [i.e. in His providence], that men cannot open their eyes but they must needs behold him" (*Inst.* 1.5.1).

Calvin's concept of God is of an ever-active Being. He attacks the Epicureans bitterly, "who dream of a God otiose and inert"[1] (*Inst.* 1.16.4): "And truly God doth claim and will have us ascribe unto him an almightiness, not such as the sophisters do imagine, vain, idle, and as it were sleeping, but waking, effectual, working and busied in continual doing. Nor such a one as is only a general beginning of a confused motion, as if he would command a river to flow by his appointed channels, but such a one as is bent and ready at all his particular movings. For he is therefore called almighty, not because he can do and yet sitteth still and doth nothing, or by general instinct only continueth the order of nature that he hath before appointed: but because he governing both heaven and earth by

[1] ". . . qui Deum otiosum inertemque somniant,"

his providence so ordereth all things that nothing chanceth but by his advised purpose" (*Inst.* 1.16.3). This is the meaning of the sovereignty of God. God is the sovereign Lord, not only in title and honour but also in fact. He reigns supreme over all—over angels, devils, men and all creatures. If He is the sovereign Lord, all creatures do His will; some joyfully and willingly, others sullenly and unwillingly. Hence we reach the conclusion that all things are so ruled by the secret will of God, "... that nothing occurs unless decréed by His knowledge and will"[1] (*Inst.* 1.16.3). Worldly events, then, are the works of God equally with the creation; and being the works of God, they are the manifestation of Himself as the Creator.

Thus, for Calvin, history is not a confused miscellany of events and human activities. Nor, on the other hand, is it a clear pattern, exhibiting one or other of the urges of the human mind and soul towards their ideals. He readily admits that, as far as men can see, the course of events in the world is anything but clear, and likens it to a storm: "When thick clouds do cover the heaven, and a violent tempest ariseth, then because both a heavysome mistiness is cast before our eyes, and the thunder troubleth our ears, and all our senses are amazed with terror, we think that all things are confounded and troubled together: and yet all the while there remaineth in the heaven the same quietness and calmness that was before. So must we think, that while the troublesome state of things in the world taketh from us ability to judge, God, by the pure light of his righteousness and wisdom, doth in well framed order govern and dispose even those very troublesome motions themselves to a right end" (*Inst.* 1.17.1). History is, then, the activity of men ruled, whether they know it or not, whether they will or not, by God. If they willingly were ruled by God, the course of history would run happily and peacefully; but since unregenerate man continually rebels against the will of God and so is ruled unwillingly, the disturbances, national and private, which bring men insecurity and misery, abound. Nevertheless, the chaotic state of the world must not lead us to think that God is either unable or for any reason unwilling to govern all the affairs of His world. What is not evident to our reason or our senses we accept in faith.

[1] ". . . ut nihil contingat, nisi ab ipso sciente et volente decretum,"[2]

Now the problem is whether the providence of God is His self-manifestation as the Creator. Yes, says Calvin, providence is the activity of God, the *opus dei*, and that which God does shows us what He is—it is by His works that we know Him. " Also in the second sort of his works, I mean those that come to pass beside the ordinary course of nature, there doth appear no less evident proof of his powers " (*Inst.* 1.5.7). The particulars to which he refers in the *Institutio* are the punishment of sinners and the reward of the godly (1.5.7), the overthrow of the proud and the exaltation of the humble (1.5.8), God's mercy to sinners (1.5.7) and His succour for those in need (1.5.8). Indeed, " His wisdom is eminently displayed in ordaining every single thing at the best possible time, thus confounding the wisdom of the world and ' taking the wise in their own craftiness '; and finally disposing nothing without the best of reasons "[1] (*Inst.* 1.5.8). It is thus in the course of world-history and in the experience of every man, as well as in the preservation of the creation and the orderly course of nature, that God shows Himself to man.

When we have seen, however, that Calvin undoubtedly teaches a self-manifestation of the Creator in the universe, in history and in experience, we have immediately to ask what use he makes of it in his theology. And it is just here that he introduces that " But " that turns him from a natural into a Christian theologian. All that has been said concerning this revelation has now to be severely qualified.

The primary purpose of revelation is certainly that God may make Himself known. Can He then be known by means of a consideration of His works? Originally, yes: in fact, not now. Between the original and the actual is the Fall, which decisively alters the whole problem of knowledge and revelation. To the knowledge that " God our maker doth by his power sustain us, by his providence govern us, by his goodness nourish us, and endow us with all kinds of blessings " the " genuine order of nature " (*genuinus ordo naturae*) would have led us " if Adam had retained innocence " (*si integer stetisset Adam*) (*Inst.* 1.2.1). This conditional phrase is, as Karl Barth points out in *Nein!* definitive to the understanding of the early

[1] " Sapientia ipsa manifeste excellit dum optima unamquanque rem opportunitate dispensat: quamlibet mundi perspicaciam confundit, deprehendit astutos in astutia sua: nihil denique non optima ratione attemperat,"

chapters—and, indeed, of the first book—of the *Institutio*.

Man in his created state of purity was capable of the knowledge of God. True, he did not know Him immediately, nor, as it were, in an ascending scale, but by revelation. But he was capable of so knowing Him. There existed a harmony between God, the creation and man, so that man was able to perceive God in the creation and in himself. There was not needed a special illumination of the mind that God might be known, for man's soul and mind, bearing the image of God, was in a state of illumination, thus making him always capable of hearing the Divine voice, of seeing the Divine image. " With these noble gifts the first state of man excelled, so that he not only had enough of reason, understanding, wisdom, and judgment, for the government of this earthly life, but also to climb up even to God and to eternal felicity " (*Inst.* 1.15.8).

For such a soul and mind the works of God were a valid revelation of God. But such a soul and mind ceased to exist when Adam fell. So that the present actual state of man is that he is " despoiled of his divine array ", " a miserable ruin ", " an immense mass of deformity ", ignorant, corrupt, impotent, superstitious, obstinate. The image of God has been corrupted in such a manner that God can now only be known by the special illumination of the mind by the Holy Spirit. Calvin says of Adam, that " the image of God was not altogether defaced and blotted out in him " (*Inst.* 1.15.4), but he also asserts everywhere in his writings and preaching that man cannot, by his own unaided effort, know God, and that this aid is not to be conceived of as co-operation between God and man, but as the re-creative work of God alone. Something indeed remains of the *imago dei*, but it is of no value in knowing God. It may not be conceived of as even the faintest glimmer of light in the soul to enable man to perceive the God who has revealed Himself in His works. As far as the knowledge of God goes, the *imago dei* is so corrupted as to be useless. The faculty of perceiving the Creator in His creation and in history is not impaired, but lost: man, according to the whole tenor of Calvin's theology, is not suffering from dimness of sight but from total and incurable blindness.

The revelation, however, does not cease to be revelation because man does not recognise it as such. It is true that the

creation was also involved in Adam's Fall and that the light does not shine so brightly now, but Calvin does not make much of this point. The important thing is that the light shines sufficiently brightly; that God reveals Himself sufficiently clearly. The beginning of Book 1, chapter 5, still stands, and refers to things as they are, not as they were before the Fall. But if man cannot know God from His works, of what value is this revelation? What is the function of the works of God as revelation?

Theoretically, it fulfils a positive function. God offers all men the opportunity of knowing Him, by manifesting Himself in His works: " Moreover, as the perfection of a blessed life standeth in the knowledge of God: that the way to felicity should be stopped to none, therefore God hath not only planted in the minds of men that seed of religion which we have spoken of, but also hath so disclosed himself in the whole workmanship of the world, and daily so manifestly presenteth himself, that men cannot open their eyes but they must needs behold him " (*Inst.* 1.5.1). Man could and should know God thus. This must be stressed. No good is done by minimising man's possibilities or the reality of the revelation; nor is there any danger in stressing them, for such a course makes the actuality more terrible. God Himself—not an angel, not an emanation from the Godhead, but the most holy God Himself, the Eternal, the Almighty—clearly shows Himself daily to every man: and yet, such is our blindness, that no man recognises Him.

This is the course that Calvin pursues. The conclusion that he draws is that man is inexcusable. The greater the possibility of knowing God by His works—and such a knowledge is solid and fruitful (*solida et fructuosa*) (*Inst.* 1.5.9)—the more inexcusable is man that he does not know God. Thus he turns to Romans 1.18 ff.: " And Paul, where he teacheth that by the creation of the world was disclosed that which was to be known concerning God, doth not mean such a disclosing as may be perceived by the understanding of man how quick soever: but rather sheweth that the same proceedeth no further than to make them inexcusable " (*Inst.* 1.5.14). The function of the works of God as revelation is, then, negative—to take away any excuse for breaking the first table of the Law. As such, this function serves as a preparation—also negative—for the Gospel. Apart from the Scriptures it has no positive function,

but by itself it has the negative function of making all men guilty before God: " Therefore, although that same brightness, which both in heaven and earth shineth in the eyes of all men, doth sufficiently take away all defence from the wickedness of men, even so as God to wrap all mankind in one guiltiness, doth shew his divine majesty to all without exception as it were portrayed out in his creatures: yet is it necessary that we have also another and a better help that may rightly direct us to the very creator of the world " (*Inst.* 1.6.1).

It is the Holy Scriptures which are this help (*adminiculum*), and therefore it is with the Scriptures that we must begin, if we are to know and worship God: " Thus then ought we to maintain, that to the end true religion may shine among us, we must take our beginning at the heavenly doctrine: and that no man can have any taste be it never so little of true and sound doctrine, unless he hath been scholar to the scripture " (*Inst.* 1.6.2). The Scriptures are the Word of God (*verbum* or *sermo*) in which the Holy Spirit speaks. Indeed, for Calvin the expression " the Holy Spirit says " is generally synonymous with " the Scripture says ". Therefore he calls the Scriptures *oracula dei*, the true voice of God speaking to us.

This Divine authorship cannot be proved, and indeed ought not to be proved; for such proof, being human, would provide a natural instead of a supernatural foundation for faith, and thus would, in effect, destroy faith in the God who speaks in Scripture by destroying faith in the Word which He speaks. In answer to the question " who can assure us that God is the author of them?" Calvin replies that the Scripture itself so assures us. It is self-authenticating—*αὐτόπιστος*. But it must be remembered that when he speaks of Scripture, he links with it by an unbreakable bond the Holy Spirit. The Scripture is the Word of God because it has been spoken by the Spirit, who continues to speak that same word. The self-authentication of the Scripture does not therefore rest, as Calvin himself tries to make it rest in chapter 8, on certain qualities of the Bible considered as a book, but upon the Scripture in its function as the living and quickening Word of the Spirit of God. Thus, the self-authentication of the Scriptures is, in fact, so closely allied to the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti* as to be indistinguishable from it. We submit ourselves to the Scriptures because we believe

that God is their author: " Let this therefore stand as an undoubted maxim, or truth, that they whom the Holy Ghost hath inwardly taught, do wholly rest upon the scripture, and that the same scripture is to be credited for its own sake, and ought not to be made subject to demonstration and reasons: but yet the certainty which it getteth among us, it attaineth by the witness of the Holy Ghost " (*Inst.* 1.7.5).

The function of the Scriptures is to teach us who is the God who created and sustains the universe: or to follow Calvin more precisely in his own words: " Deum mundi opificem nobis patefieri in Scriptura " (*Inst.* 1.6.1). This revelation of the Creator in Scripture is frankly didactic: the Scripture teaches us who is the Creator, what His nature is, and what He does. Scripture is a school, he often says; the Holy Spirit is the schoolmaster and the Scriptures are His lessons: " For although he comprehendeth also the other uses of the law, yet in generality he meaneth, that forasmuch God doth in vain call unto him all nations by the beholding of the heaven and earth, therefore this is the peculiar school of the children of God " (*Inst.* 1.6.4). If we would know God we must become the scholars of Scripture.

In this lies a distinctive feature of Calvin's thought. Our sin consists in pride; pride not merely of will, but also of mind —we are high-minded. Although we are ignorant, we think we know; we see no need to be taught, as though we were little children. But except we become as little children we cannot enter the Kingdom of God. We must humble ourselves to the realisation of our ignorance, and submit ourselves to become the scholars of God, which means, in effect, the scholars of Scripture. It is this abdication of reason as sovereign, this humbling of the mind, this obedient submission to the master's knowledge, which is the foundation, the prerequisite and the condition for the knowledge of God: " no man can have any taste be it never so little of true and sound doctrine, unless he hath been scholar to the scripture. And from hence flows the original of true understanding, that we reverently embrace whatsoever it pleaseth God from his word to testify of himself. For not only the perfect and in all points absolute faith, but also all right knowledge of God springeth from obedience " (*Inst.* 1.6.2).

We have seen that Calvin denies without ambiguity the efficacy of the works of God as a primary source of the knowledge of God, and asserts the sufficiency of the Scriptures for that purpose. From the Scriptures we learn to know God the Creator—that is, we learn His identity and His nature, both, in relation to ourselves. In teaching us this, the Scriptures interpret aright the creation and history. " We must, I say, come to his word, wherein God is well and lively set out by his works, when his works are weighed not after the perverseness of our own judgment, but according to the rule of the eternal truth " (*Inst.* 1.6.3). The Scripture is a thread, guiding us through the labyrinth of the universe in which we live. The revelation which blind sinners could not see, now shines forth before eyes that wear spectacles[1]—that is, minds taught and enlightened by the Scriptures. The universe is now perceived to be, not an accidental or unmeaning system, but the work of God. It is the creation; it has a Creator. World history and personal experience of life is no longer regarded tragically, comically or satirically as a chaotic or cosmic sequence of events, but as the works of God. The Creator, executing His eternal purpose by His sovereign power, upholds and orders all things. That which our sin vitiated into a condemnation, the word of God restores to a source of the knowledge of God. If we begin with the word of God and learn to know God there, we find that the same God says the same thing in His works.

> In the meantime let it not be wearisome unto us, in this so beautiful a stage to take godly delight of the manifest and ordinary works of God. For, as I have elsewhere already said, though this be not the chief, yet is it in order the first doctrine of faith, to remember, that what way soever we turn our eyes, all that we see are the works of God, and with godly consideration to consider for what end God did make them. Therefore that we may conceive by faith so much as behoveth us to know of God, it is good first of all to learn the history of the creation of the world, how it is shortly related by Moses, and afterwards more largely set out by holy men, specially by Basil and Ambrose. (*Inst.* 1.14.20.)

We must stress that, for Calvin, the works of God were a legitimate and valid means of knowing God—once they had

[1] Calvin uses this metaphor twice in the *Institutio*, and as things have turned out, it is a bad metaphor. He most certainly did not mean that man suffers merely from dimness of sight, or from cataract, and needs spectacles to help him to see clearly what he already sees mistily. His whole theological aim and work repudiates that decisively. As I say, it is a bad metaphor, and should not be pressed.

been correctly interpreted by Scripture. More than that, it is our duty to learn of God by meditating upon creation and providence. The creation, and not images, as Gregory taught, is the book of the unlearned (*Comm. in Gen.* 1.8). "This is, indeed, the proper business of the whole life, in which men should daily exercise themselves, to consider the infinite goodness, justice, power and wisdom of God, in this magnificent theatre of heaven and earth" (*Comm. in Gen.* 2.3). We must beware, however, that we do not seek to explain this mystery by our own understanding, but must allow ourselves to be taught its meaning by the Scriptures. Nor should we think that in His works we can know God's essence:

> When, however, he affirms that the works of God cannot be distinctly known by us, it is not for the purpose of deterring us from seeking the knowledge of them or from the examination of them, but only to lay a restraint upon our rashness, which would otherwise go beyond the proper boundaries in this respect. To this end, the words *to thee* or *before thee* are expressly employed, by which we are admonished that, however diligently a man may set himself to meditate upon the works of God, he can only attain to the extremities or borders of them. Although, then, so great a height be far above our reach, we must nevertheless endeavour, as much as in us lies, to approach it more and more by continual advances; as we see also the hand of God stretched forth to disclose to us, so far as it is expedient, those wonders which we are unable of ourselves to discover. There is nothing so preposterous as to affect, of one's own account, a gross ignorance of the providence of God, because as yet we cannot comprehend it perfectly, but only discern it in part. (*Comm. in Ps.* 40.5.)

A difficulty, however, encounters us at this point. Is not Calvin, by allowing the *opera dei* as a medium of our knowledge of God, violating the Reformation principle of *Scriptura sola*? If the Scriptures contain all that is necessary for the knowledge of God, as, like all the Reformers, he asserted most strongly, why does he exhort us to contemplate the works of God? In other words, what is the relationship between *oracula dei* and *opera dei*?

There is an interdependence between the two, with the emphasis placed upon the word of God. The universe is meaningless to us unless we receive the *lumen verbi* to interpret it aright. Hence the word is indispensable. But the *opera dei* are likewise indispensable, for the very obvious reason that they are there, and of necessity must be. Now once we have the word of God to teach us the knowledge of the Creator, and thereby to inter-

pret the *opera dei* to us, we must, so to speak, re-read them in the light of the word. To neglect them would be to neglect also the Scriptures, which direct us to them. The revelation in the *opera dei* does not teach us anything that the word does not teach us, but it is not therefore superseded by the word, for the marks of the Workman are indelibly imprinted upon His workmanship, and need to be perceived or acknowledged by us. The earlier, yet still remaining, revelation is not destroyed by the later, but is made clear by it. On the other hand, however, the *opera dei*, when once they have been perceived in their true rôle as revelation, do not render the corresponding revelation in the Scriptures superfluous. We do not begin with the Scriptures and then, leaving them, go on to a rational consideration of the creation and providence. For if we leave this revelation which interprets revelation for our own interpretation, we shall go astray and be lost in the labyrinth. The metaphor of the Scriptures as spectacles (*Inst.* 1.6.1 and 14.1) means, *inter alia*, that we cannot do without them.

When by the *lumen verbi* we come to consider the universe, we find that, although there are many things we cannot understand and many things which distress us, it acquires a new meaning. We and our world have a Creator: this Creator is our loving Father: this Father is the sovereign Lord, who " reigneth, be the people never so unpatient ". By the beauty of the universe, by the fair fruits of man's culture, by good hap and by bad hap, we are pointed to God the Creator, the gracious Father and the righteous Judge.

> Finally, to make an end, so oft as we name God the creator of heaven and earth let this come in our minds withal, that the disposition of all things which he hath created is in his hand and power, and that we are his children whom he hath taken into his own charge and keeping to nourish and bring up: that we may look for all good things at his hand, and assuredly, that he will never suffer us to want such things as are needful for our safety, to the end our hope should depend upon no other than himself: that whatsoever we desire, our prayers may be directed to him: of what thing soever we receive profit, we may acknowledge it to be his benefit, and confess it with thanksgiving: that being allured with so great sweetness of his goodness and liberality, we may study to love and honour him with all our heart. (*Inst.* 1.14.22.)

We have finally to consider what it is to know the Creator, and what is the extent of this knowledge.

The essence of God is and remains incomprehensible, for He dwells in light unapproachable and does not reveal to us His unveiled glory. " His essence indeed is incomprehensible . . . but he hath in all his works graven certain marks of his glory " (*Inst.* 1.5.1). It is the glory of God which is revealed to us. His glory is revealed in the Creation, in man, in the angels, and in providence. Glory is opposed to essence, and is closely akin to majesty. It might be taken as the sovereignty of God, which means also his uniqueness, His God-hood, which separates Him from all things else and differentiates Him from all man-made gods, and which He guards jealously. God reveals His glory, means: God reveals Himself as—God. Commenting on Isaiah 40.5, Calvin paraphrases " the glory of the Lord shall be revealed " as " maiestatemque suam ac potentiam conspicuum reddat "; and on John 17.5 he again equates the two words: " The glory which I had with thee before the world was. He now declares that he desires nothing that does not strictly belong to him, but only that in the flesh he may appear such as he was before the creation of the world; or, to speak more plainly, that the Divine majesty, which he had always possessed, may now be illustriously displayed in the person of the Mediator, and in the human flesh with which he was clothed."

Both majesty and glory, however, are abstract terms. But God's glory and majesty are not known in abstracts, but by His exercise of His power and authority, by what Calvin called *virtutes dei*. The word is not easy to define. It originally means, of course, powers or excellences. He uses the singular in the accustomed way as a synonym for *potentia*. A comparison of the Latin and French texts is enlightening. *Virtutes* in 1539 and 1559 is usually translated simply by its French equivalent *vertus*. There are two striking exceptions. First, in the sentence " the Lord is manifested by His own *virtutibus* ".[1] Thus 1539 (*C.R.* 1, p. 289, l. 1 f.) and 1559 (1.5.9). The last French edition of 1560 has *vertus*, but 1541 has, instead, *oeuvres*. The second example is taken from 1559, 1.10.2: " But because I would not keep up too many examples together, at this present let one Psalm [145] suffice us: . . . in which the sum of all his *virtutum* is so exactly rehearsed that no omission can be

[1] "A suis enim virtutibus manifestatur Dominus."

observed."[1] This is found first in 1539 and survived unaltered to the end. The French editions of 1541-1560 have for *virtutum proprietez* (*C.R.* III, p. 116, l. 8)—i.e. that which belongs to God.

Now let us see what common meaning arises from this textual comparison. We are presented with three words: *virtutes* or *vertus* = *oeuvres* = *proprietez*. Both the context and the proper meaning of *virtutes* forbid us to regard *oeuvres* as the synonym for *opera dei* in the sense in which we are used to the expression in Calvin—the finished result of God's activity. It should rather be taken as that activity itself, the act of working. In the second place, *proprietez* does not mean God's attributes as they are in Himself. Both the Psalm 145 itself and Calvin's commentary upon it, show that he meant rather the activities of God in the world that have for their source the attributes of His nature. We can, then, best express *virtutes* as the exercise towards His creatures of the attributes of the nature of God.

We are now in a position to take a comprehensive view of the content of the revelation with which the first book of the *Institutes* is concerned.

God reveals Himself to us for our sakes, and therefore He gives us " a description, not of what he is in respect to himself, but what a one he is toward us: that this knowledge of him may rather stand in a lively feeling, than in an empty and moonshiny speculation " (*Inst.* 1.10.2). God does not reveal Himself to us as something different from what He is—that would be no revelation. Yet we do not know all about God. There remains the ultimate which we cannot approach. We know God truly, but we do not know Him wholly. Taught by Scripture, we recognise Him in His works as the Creator; that is, we perceive his *sapientia*, *potentia*, *bonitas*, *veritas*, *clementia et severitas*, His *misericordia* and His *iudicium*, *iustitia*, *vita*, and perhaps His *aeternitas*. These are His *virtutes*, by which we know Him. Therefore, to know the Creator is to know Him as the One who, because He is wise, almighty, loving, etc., exercises towards His creatures wisdom, power, goodness, etc. This is the *effigies dei* which the Scriptures teach us to see reflected in the mirror of the *opera dei*.

[1] ". . . in quo tam exacte summa omnium eius virtutum recensetur, ut nihil omissum videri queat."

It now remains to see of what value this revelation is to man, when rightly apprehended and believed in. It does not, despite a sentence apparently to the contrary in 1.6.1, lead us to salvation. That is, it does not bring to us the forgiveness of our sins and eternal life. We know God as Creator, not as Redeemer. We learn the first lesson of religion—to be religious and godly. And the nature of pure religion is this: "faith joined with an earnest fear of God, so that fear may contain in it a willing reverence, and draw with it a right form of worshipping such as is appointed in the law" (*Inst.* 1.2.2). These four qualities of *fides*, *timor*, *reverentia* and *cultus* sum up what Calvin has said in this second chapter. *Fides* here comprises both belief and trust; belief that there is a God, that He has revealed Himself to us in His word and works, that He is our Creator and Preserver, our loving heavenly Father, that there is no good thing that does not come from Him, and that nothing can take place upon the earth but what He wills. And trust that is assured that it may in all circumstances rely upon His help, that He will supply all our needs, and that under the shadow of His wing there is safety.

Timor and *reverentia* are always coupled in Calvin's mind, *timor* being a little the stronger word. Only the ungodly should regard God with terror as a Judge. Believers should learn to fear Him as a son fears a father. The believer's fear is a loving fear. It is a willing obedience and submission to God:

> Because she [the godly mind] knoweth him to be her Lord and Father, therefore she determineth that he is worthy that she should in all things have regard to his authority, reverence his majesty, procure the advancement of his glory, and obey his commandments. Because she seeth that he is a righteous judge, and armed with power to punish sinners, therefore she always setteth his judgment seat before her eyes, and with fear of him withdraweth and restraineth herself from provoking his wrath. Yet is she not so afraid with the feeling of his judgment, that she would convey herself from it, although there were a way open to escape it: but rather she doth no less love him, while he extendeth vengeance upon the wicked, than while he is beneficent to the godly. . . . Moreover she doth not for mere dread of punishment restrain herself from sinning: but because she loveth and reverenceth him as her father, attendeth on him and honoureth him as her Lord, therefore although there were no hell at all, yet she dreadeth his only displeasure. (*Inst.* 1.2.2.)

The expression of this faith, fear and love is worship. Without it there cannot be said to be any knowledge of God, for

" our mind cannot conceive of God without ascribing some worship to him " (*Inst.* 1.2.2). How much more, then, when we trust in God, fear and reverence Him, should our hearts outflow towards Him in worship. Yet such worship is rare. Many pay a formal worship to God, but very few show by their heart-felt worship that pure and genuine religion which springs from the first and simple knowledge of God their Creator who has revealed Himself in His works and in the Holy Scriptures.

CALVIN'S DOCTRINE OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE[1]

by The Rev. J. G. MATHESON

I

It may be useful first of all to summarise the argument under this heading in the *Institutes*, both to set limits to our subject, and also to furnish us with points of reference for our discussion. The preceding chapters deal with the operation of the Holy Spirit in those who are united with Christ, especially showing Him to be the author of faith and repentance. Our subject is placed in this setting at the beginning of chapter 6, where, in the opening sentence we read: " We have said that the end of regeneration is, that the life of the faithful may exhibit a symmetry and agreement between the righteousness of God and their obedience." The roots of the Christian life, then, are in regeneration. But since " our *tardiness* needs much stimulation and assistance " it is necessary for us to have a *rule* by which we may be guided in the *regulation* of our life. Such a rule is to be found in Scripture, not, of course, laid down in a methodical way, yet with sufficient emphasis and clarity. This treatment of the Christian life, therefore, confines itself to discovering, under the guidance of Scripture, how the new life born in us by God's Spirit, is to be developed and made perfect.

The Scriptural plan, according to Calvin, has two main parts. First, the love of righteousness must be instilled into us. Second, a rule must be *prescribed* to keep us in that way. As to the first part, the inculcating in us of a love of righteousness, various arguments from Scripture are gathered together, beginning with the greatest of all reasons for holiness, " because God is holy ", and going on to accumulate a great mass of Scriptural reasoning, requiring holiness in the regenerate life. Particular attention is paid to those whose profession is merely nominal, and the argument concludes on this point with the assertion that, though perfection of character cannot be ex-

[1] Calvin's *Institutes*, Book III, chaps. 6-10. Address given to the Scottish Church Theology Society, 1948.

pected in this world, yet at least it must be the constant goal of the Christian life.

Turning to the second part, the rule which Scripture prescribes, Calvin proceeds to set out a great general principle, the principle of self-denial, basing it on Rom. 12.1: " Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." That is to say, the central principle of Christian living is that we are not our own, but God's. Our desires and will and even our reason are to be submitted to the direction of the Holy Spirit. Where this true self-denial reigns in a life, it leaves no room for selfishness and lust. Where it is absent, even the virtues of that life are diseased by " a depraved passion for the praise of men ".

> The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared . . . teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope. . .

There follows an exposition of the passage Titus 2.11-14, in which the life of self-denial is taken to be set out in a rather more codified form, first negatively, as a denial of ungodliness and worldly lusts, and then positively, where the three adverbs " soberly ", " righteously " and " godly " are taken to be a classification of all the actions of life. Since, as Calvin says, " nothing is more difficult than to forsake all carnal considerations ", he emphasises that part of the passage where we are urged to turn our attention to the hope of a blessed immortality. He reverts to this last point in chapter 9.

Returning to the main principle of self-denial, this is shown to be related " partly to men, but principally to God ". We are able, indeed to put considerations for other men before selfish considerations only when we put God before all. Real charity to men is possible only when we understand that we are not our own, but God's.

Having made that point, he pays no more heed to the manward side of the life of self-denial and turns to the principal branch of it which consists in resigning ourselves completely to the will of God. This is the only way to happiness. The believer, having dedicated himself to the will of God, looks not for wealth and honours. Certainly he will never seek them by unlawful means. If they are denied him, he will not be

unduly downcast. And even when all life's ills and accidents happen, he will receive them " with a placid and grateful heart ".

Calvin goes on to adduce various reasons explaining the necessity of suffering in the Christian life, such as, e.g., that if Christ learned through suffering, much more must we; that suffering advances us in humility; it teaches us to rely on God and discover His help; that it tries our patience and teaches us obedience; that in suffering God corrects us for past offences. By these considerations we learn to bear our cross cheerfully. Not indeed, that a Christian must make a stoical attempt to petrify his emotions of grief, but that even in sorrow we trust in God and assure ourselves that our pain is " for our own benefit ". In all sorrow, therefore, the Christian is to know " a certain spiritual joy ".

In chapter 9 the argument takes up again the necessity for meditation on the future life. " We must habituate ourselves to a contempt of the present life." " Either the earth must become vile in our estimation or it must retain our immoderate love." " There is no medium between these two extremes." By contempt of the world he means neither hatred of life, nor ingratitude for God's gifts. These are tokens of God's goodness and as such we are grateful for them, while understanding that in themselves they are only misery. " We ought to desire death, not to dread it." The Cross of Christ triumphs in the hearts of believers only when their eyes are directed to the power of the resurrection.

Finally Calvin turns to consider " the right use of the present life and its supports ". The ascetic principle is disavowed as inhuman. God has provided not only for our necessity but also for our pleasure and delight. But the Scripture " prohibits us from every care and affection which would turn our thoughts from the heavenly life and attention to the improvement of our souls ". For the right use of the present life and its gifts, then, we must begin with contempt of the present life and meditation on heavenly immortality. Three rules follow. First, " that they that have wives be as though they had none: they that buy as though they possessed not: they that use this world as not abusing it." Second, we must learn to endure poverty patiently, as well as to enjoy wealth temperately. Third, we must regard

all we have as deposits entrusted us by God, of which we must give an account.

The closing paragraph enjoins on Christians that they must " regard their vocation ". By this he means that we are to keep, quietly and without envy, the station in life appointed to us. " He that is in obscurity will lead a private life without discontent so as not to desert the station in which God hath placed him." " No employment is so mean that it has not dignity or worth in the sight of God."

II

Coming now to our critical examination of Calvin's Doctrine of the Christian Life, the first point which seems to require elucidation is the relation in the life of the Christian between freedom and discipline. Calvin assumes, without any ado, that a prescribed rule of conduct is necessary. He appeals, as he so often does, to experience. Every Christian disciple is aware of his tendency to grow slack and deviate from Christlikeness, therefore he must regulate his spiritual life in order to preserve it. Every Christian society discovers the need of embodying its way of life in a commonly accepted rule of conduct, which may be interpreted narrowly or broadly, yet remains a rule of conduct. The history of missionary work supplies us with any number of instances of converts, brought suddenly out of the regulated life of their pre-Christian community, with disastrous moral results. The Christian life seems to need, as a condition of its growth, a community in which a certain discipline of life has become normal and habitual. There are very great differences between Christian communions, in the extent to which the Christian life must be disciplined. But there is hardly any disagreement on the fact that some kind of discipline in practice is required. Scripture bears this out. Even in St. Paul's letters there are certain kinds of action set out as forbidden, and certain other kinds as compulsory. It cannot be taken for granted that once the work of the Spirit has begun in a man, he is free without bounds. There is an eternal element in law. Even when we are freed from its condemnation we are still subject to its rule.

There is difficulty here. Discipline is an expression of law, not of grace. We have to face, therefore, the theological diffi-

culty of reconciling the need for discipline with the truth that in Christ we are not under law but under grace. There is also the practical difficulty created by the tension in Christian society and in the personal life, between Christian liberty and Christian discipline. However much it may be true that regulation is required, it is also true that no regulation must be allowed to hamper the free operation of the Holy Spirit. There are times when discipline must be disregarded and rules broken, if the Holy Spirit is indeed in control. In a saint, for example, there is always a suggestion of the anarchist. The codes of behaviour necessary for the many, are too restrictive for him. And in the life of even the normal disciple, there is a constant friction between discipline and freedom. It is an omission in Calvin's treatment of the Christian life in the chapters under review, that he makes no mention at all of this necessary tension between the freedom of grace and the rule of law.

There are two ways in which that tension can be avoided. One is by denying the need for discipline. This is to go against the facts of experience and history. The other is to view the whole Christian life as a discipline: the fulfilling of a law, certainly on a higher plane than any other, yet a law: as it were, a legalising of grace. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that in the section of the *Institutes* we are considering Calvin at least tends in this direction. In the statement of the vitalising power of Christian life he speaks of the love of righteousness being instilled into our hearts. Is there not even here a hint of the defect that becomes apparent later? Would St. Paul not have said rather, the love of Christ? It is in a personal relation with God in Christ that Christian life is empowered, not in the quest for an impersonal value, even one so lofty as righteousness. In the exposition of the Titus passage, Calvin comes very near to viewing the whole of Christian living as capable of being classified into certain kinds of acts. In this whole section of the *Institutes*, the doctrine of union with Christ by faith, so powerfully expounded elsewhere, is curiously absent. It is probably true to say that in this view of Christian life the grace which sustains it is thought of as the working out of a higher law, rather than depending throughout on a personal relation with Christ as Saviour.

Probably no final adjustment of the balance between free-

dom and discipline in this life is possible. It is evident that both are required, just as an artist's freedom in music or poetry is exercised within the bounds of his art, or as love is free to act only when it binds itself to the object of its affection. The freedom of a Christian begins when he takes vows. " Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee." Yet when all is said the difficulty remains and will remain, of the tension between the need for the discipline of the individual life and the Christian society on the one hand, and the need for freedom to break these bounds on the other.

The second point in Calvin's doctrine of the Christian life which might usefully be considered, is the relation between our love to God and our love to man.

In speaking of self-denial as the central principle of Christian life, Calvin gives a penetrating analysis of merely humanitarian action, and states the impossibility of doing the highest service to other men, if we are not first dedicated to the service of God.

The importance of this cannot be exaggerated. It is particularly relevant to-day. Humanistic virtue, the virtue of pity, in which, without any reference to God, we carry out the relief of men's sufferings and the supply of their needs, is generally regarded as in itself the highest kind of action. It is this that inspires most of the work being done in our time by medicine and the social services. Let us recognise at once that this non-religious humanitarian activity does inspire an immense amount of self-sacrifice; that it is one of the noblest features of contemporary civilisation. Yet of itself it lacks what Dr. Niebuhr calls " the dimension of depth ". In itself it lacks an ultimate meaning. The question, Why do I serve God? carries the answer in itself. The question, Why do I serve men? does not. Further, it is when we see, as Calvin puts it, God's image in men that we recognise in them the need, not only for temporary relief, but for eternal salvation, and we estimate as we ought the real importance of the service of other men. It is only when we love men in God that we love them truly. The humanitarian activity of our time is generous and self-sacrificing, yet much of it is superficial. It alleviates, but it fails to redeem. It is very much to the point then to insist, as Calvin does, that of the two parts of self-denial, that which relates to God and that which relates to men, the latter is dependent on the former.

Yet here, once again, there must be a balance. Christian life has tended constantly to err in either of two directions. On the one hand, it tends to be towards other men merely social, humanitarian, to be engaged in palliative work, as a kind of ambulance service. This is a real danger in the life of the Church at the present time. On the other hand, there is a danger that Christian people lay such exclusive stress in devotion to God alone, that their attitude to men becomes impersonal and the duty of serving one another in love is neglected. It is into this second error that Calvin seems to fall. The whole area of Christian life which is included in the command to love one another is almost entirely neglected here. After the most cursory mention of it, he hastens on to " the principal branch of self-denial which we have said relates to God ". There are two remarkable results in his consequent treatment of the subject. The first is that the interest descends immediately to the theme of the personal comfort of the Christian. There is a remarkable fall from heaven in the first sentence of section 8 in chapter 7 which reads thus, " Let us describe again, more at large, the principal branch of self-denial, which we have said relates to God, and indeed many observations have already been made concerning it, which it would be needless to repeat. It will be sufficient to show how it habituates us to equanimity and patience." Thereafter the chapter deals solely with the benefit accruing to the believer himself, from putting God before all else. The second result is that in his zeal for God's glory, he seems to look down on men from so great a height that he has lost personal interest in them. This is apparent in his whole treatment of suffering, which is strangely impersonal. It lacks sympathy. It is suffering seen only from the point of view of justice. It wants the warmth of Christian compassion. These results apparent in Calvin's argument, following on too exclusive a stress on devotion to God alone as distinct from love to men, have been apparent also in Christian life and society. As early as New Testament times there appear to have been men who neglected the need of their brother in their professed devotion to God. No one could accuse the Inquisition of lack of zeal for God's glory. That very zeal seemed to blind them, so that they saw men not as persons but only as material for the realising of God's glory. On the other hand, pietistic religion,

cultivating the love of God in the soul, has too often flourished at the expense of practical service to other men. Devotion to God alone is apt to degenerate into mere concern for personal salvation.

Here again is a balance to be achieved, between devotion to God as God, alone worthy of love, and love to men as men, because they are God's creatures and children. The dimension of depth in Christian life, in which all actions are related to God, must be matched by a true breadth of Christian compassion.

The third point of criticism, which follows closely from the previous one, is that in Calvin's view of it, the Christian life is concerned primarily with the welfare of the individual Christian himself. It is significant that while it starts on the highest level, describing a life whose roots are in pure grace, depending on union with Christ, and involving complete denial of self in devotion to God, the whole discussion descends more and more, and narrows as it descends, until it becomes firmly embedded in a concern for the comfort and satisfaction of the individual believer. Like an unnatural beam of light, which instead of spreading out to illuminate an ever-widening area, becomes narrower and narrower, till finally it is fixed on one point, which in fact is hardly worth lighting up at all.

It may be that discussion on the Christian life is properly to be confined to personal religion. Even if that is so, however, it need not be inverted on itself as it is in Calvin's treatment of it. Chapter 10, for example, on the proper use of the present life, while it contains a great deal that is wise and balanced, especially in view of the extremist tendencies of Calvin's time, seems to view this world merely as an area of innumerable pitfalls set for the destruction of the believing soul, and not at all as the field in which the Christian is to fulfil his redeeming mission by God's grace. The last section, on vocation, is extraordinarily narrow. Of course it does not pretend to be a full discussion of vocation in its widest sense. And it is fair to say that the extreme conservatism of this section is contradicted by other passages in Calvin, for example in the *Sermon on Dan.* 6, where he affirms that it is not always a Christian duty just to put up with things as they are. At the same time it is strange that here there is no hint of the fact that the calling of God has a purpose beyond the individual Christian life.

The fundamental lack in this treatment of Christian life is that the doctrine of union with Christ is not extended to embrace the whole activity of it. That doctrine is stated with tremendous emphasis in the preceding parts. It is seen clearly to be the only basis of Christian life. But the goal of that life is conceived in impersonal terms as the attainment of righteousness. In the true Scriptural view the union of the believing soul with Christ is not only the beginning but also the continuing of it and the final goal. The aim of the Christian life can be truly stated only in the form of a paradox. It is a striving to become what we are. Union with Christ, the Gospel fact which is grasped by faith, is to be made effective in Christian activity. The believer, therefore, united to Christ by faith, shares in His love for men and in His redeeming action in the world. Union with Christ is, in fact, not a state, but a movement, a two-way movement, like the traffic of Jacob's ladder, the constant movement on the one hand in faith and love towards God, and the constant movement on the other hand into the world in redeeming action. It is only in a firm grasp of the doctrine of union with Christ that the fully-rounded Scriptural conception of the Christian life can be maintained. Christian life means life in Christ.

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF MAN

An Examination of Karl Barth's Doctrine[1]

I. THE NATURE OF MAN

by The Rev. W. A. WHITEHOUSE

Volume III of the *Dogmatik* is concerned with creation, and the first part dealt with the act of creation, elucidating from a specifically Christian point of view the relation of creation and covenant. In this second part, it is the creature which is studied. For a theology bound to the Word of God, the questions at issue concern the nature of man, and the enquiry is controlled by the fact of God having become man. The material which is handled in this vast volume is a selection from man's varied attempts to speak about himself. The aim is to illuminate and to correct the speech of the contemporary Christian Church on this subject, and to do so by proper theological method and criteria. The resultant doctrine may not be very different from what is said in section I (A) of the Lambeth Report Part II, but one cannot help asking whether the statements made there have been reached by the searching discipline of dogmatic theology, practised with the seriousness found in Barth's work. His declared purpose is to seek " comprehensive clarifications in theology, and about theology itself ", which will give the Church strength to offer " clarifications in the broad field of politics ", a strength which is not strikingly obvious in the Lambeth conclusions about " The Church and the Modern World " and " The Christian Way of Life ". Barth is aware that in the present situation, every problem turns on a fundamental decision about the nature of man, and on p. 273 he asks where, outside Christian anthropology and ethics, is there ground for branding as inhuman anything which entails a hostile or an indifferent attitude to one's fellow man. His task here is to probe the foundations of Christian speech about man, mindful of the fact that in Christian anthropology all is not gold that glitters. (His careful criticism of Brunner's

[1] Karl Barth: *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik*, Band III/2, *Die Lehre von der Schöpfung*, 2 Teil (Evangelischer Verlag A.G. Zollikon-Zürich. pp. 816. 35 Swiss fr. 31.50 with paper covers. 1948).

Man in Revolt, on pp. 153-157, is salutary reading for British theologians.) The desperate concern for truth, which underlies this book and justifies its length, was brought home to me afresh by the important little book by Schrödinger, *What is Life?* where in an epilogue he invites us to ponder the two premises: (1) My body functions as a pure mechanism according to the laws of nature, yet (2) I know that I am directing its motions, of which I foresee the effects, which may be fateful and all-important, in which case I feel and take full responsibility for them. Can one set, alongside and prior to these premises, the fact that I am confronted by Jesus Christ, and draw out correct and non-contradictory teaching about God and eternal life, which is radically different from that to which Schrödinger points the way? The task is not so easy, nor has it been as securely done in the past, as the Anglican bishops seem to assume when they invoke " the Christian understanding of man ".

In regard to method, Barth first lays down that:

> 43.[1] Because man, beneath heaven and on earth, is the creature whose relation to God is disclosed to us in the Word of God, he is the particular object of the theological doctrine of creatures. In that the man Jesus Christ is the revealing Word of God, he is the source from which we come to know human nature made by God.

That the theme of the Bible is God's relationship with *man*, carries consequences for the theology of creation which were drawn out most notably by Luther. Scholastic theology is open to criticism in so far as it works with an *a priori* world-view, and claims knowledge of a relationship of God and creatures to which the God-man relationship must conform. Knowledge of this general relationship, and the relationship itself, appear to be established in some independence of Jesus Christ. The anthropocentric procedure characteristic of Reformed theology is not to be confused with that Idealism which makes man the measure of all things. Idealism sees man as the all-important reality, in whom all things in heaven and earth combine to form a microcosmos. The theologian must not proceed as though the significance of non-human creatures were exhausted by their contribution to the being of man. He must rather recognise that man's existence is *limited* by the reality of heaven and earth,

[1] The principal articles of doctrine are numbered consecutively throughout the *Dogmatik*, and the five included in this volume, 43-47, will be quoted in full.

angels and animals. But his starting point is the fact that in the Word of God the God-man relationship is made explicit, whereas in respect of all other being, the Creator-creature relationship is concealed (for which reason, theology, when bound to the Word of God, cannot work out an ontology of heaven and earth to which it is irrevocably committed). All that can be said of God's purpose with the rest of the cosmos is based on what is disclosed in the explicated God-man relationship. The being of man is knowable; an ontology of this special creature is possible; and this carries with it a theological knowledge of heaven and earth as the cosmos of man. Theology cannot ignore the question of how the cosmos subsists in itself, but its relationship with cosmological speculation can at best be an external, opportune one. It takes into provisional service the best available cosmology (and Barth assigns to non-theological thinking a positive significance which should disarm some of his cruder critics), but it is free to withhold its confidence, say, from a self-contained ontology of angels such as St. Thomas took over from Dionysius. Its theme is God, and His making of the world. This theme includes the fact that He has made what He has, and the theologian is bound to pay attentive and discriminating regard to the science of his day, but there is no cosmology to which he is committed.

There is no substitute for theological knowledge of man. The exact sciences, taking for granted *that* man is and *what* he is, describe his possibilities. This may be a starting point for speculative anthropology, where, however, the subject is still phenomenal man, and the subject who truly exists never makes a complete appearance. He does so only in the history which he shares with God, to which the theologian is granted access in the Word of God.

A difficulty at once appears, and the attitude adopted in face of it is of far-reaching importance. In the Word of God man is displayed as a traitor to his essential being. It may be said that existence in original sin is an accidental determination of human being; or, if this is rejected (rightly in Barth's judgment), it may be said that there has been virtually a new creation. This is equally false. Sin does not produce a new creature. The sinner is God's good creature, of whom we are trying to speak. Yet it must be admitted that we cannot pene-

trate past sin (as past a mere accidental determination) to reach undisturbed human nature. Man's nature cannot be traced from " surviving lineaments ", nor can it be inferred dialectically from knowledge of sinners. Real man is known because we can see *the sinner existing by God's grace*. When we see God's revealed grace concretely in the man Jesus, we discern a being unaltered and unalterable because of sin, and it is at this point alone that an answer is offered to the question " What is the created being of man ?" (In summary this sounds highly arbitrary. The importance of the whole book lies in the necessity and the profound implications of it.) In the Gospel we see the freedom of God to mean that He is ever and anew the gracious Creator of man. Theological anthropology is rooted in Christology, and it is well to observe that any reversal of this process leads inevitably to Docetism or to Ebionism at the focal point of Christian faith.

It is therefore the relation of God to *the man Jesus* which clarifies for us both the faithfulness of God the Creator and the unalterable character of that human nature which He has made. There is a valuable discussion on pp. 51-54 of the Biblical foundation for Christology which contains explicit safeguards against the natural tendency to reach the mystery of Christ's human nature via preconceived general anthropology. In Him, manhood is so realised as to be the ground of our manhood, by God's grace. In Him, manhood is original, preserved and revealed. The epistemological difficulty caused through the contradiction of manhood in sin can therefore be overcome, by treating sin neither too lightly nor too seriously: by treating it as man's choice of an ontological *impossibility*.

44. The being of man is the history wherein one of God's creatures, chosen and summoned by God, is apprehended by Him in its own act of response, and wherein its capacity for such an act is demonstrated.

This article (pp. 64-241) is introduced by a discussion of Jesus under the heading " Man for God ". There follows a discussion of the phenomena of humanity, and a clarification of " real man ". The first step is to see Jesus and to find His manhood in the work He does and the office He holds. Here first we must break with the Aristotelian habit of preconceiving manhood as one among many fixed species which can be known

in general, and which will be found exemplified in the " personality " behind this work and office. Jesus *is* Kyrios and Christ. It is precisely as Son of God, one with the Father, that He is man. The so-called " human touches " all safeguard this truth. There is no content to His manhood apart from this. (The evidence of the Prologue and the " I am . . ." sayings in the Fourth Gospel becomes decisive here.) Hence we must affirm of one who lives with us the same human life in the same world:

(*a*) that of this man alone can it be said that he is identically God;
(*b*) that this presence of God in man is an *act*, a saving act;
(*c*) that this act takes place in a *history* with which God's glory is bound up;
(*d*) that this man *exists* in the glory of God, in the act of His Lordship;
(*e*) that he has no neutral existence behind the history;
(*f*) that he *is* essentially *for* God, in order that God's work may happen, His Kingdom come, His Word be expressed.

We learn also from the Gospel to regard all human life as a partaking of what Jesus is; so, though there is unlikeness in this partaking (not only from the fact of sin but because of the unique identity of Jesus with God), these affirmations carry consequences for human nature in general.

(*a*) Man as such must be conceived as belonging to God;
(*b*) his existence is determined in a history which stands in recognisable relation to the divine redemption established in Jesus;
(*c*) he is not an end in himself, but is for the glory of God;
(*d*) whatever freedom means, he can never escape the Lordship of God;
(*e*) his being is a participating in what God does for him and is for him; his freedom is freedom to decide *for* this in the course of a history initiated and sustained by God (whence the " ontological impossibility " of sin);
(*f*) his being is existence in the service of God.

By these criteria the theologian can come to terms with anthropological thinking which seeks truth by abstraction, and does not acknowledge that man belongs to God, exists only in relation to God's act, exists for the glory of God, under His Lordship, and in His service. Such thinking is governed by the question of what it is that marks man off from other creatures,

and what it yields is predicated without a subject. " Rational animal ", for instance, points to a subject only when it is made into a theological definition by exploitation of the *Imago Dei* concept. Barth therefore surveys recent work in this field to discover the dogmas which have served to counter scientific modes of thought. Zöckler, in conflict with Darwinism, claimed that humanity is a natural realm, like those called animal, vegetable and mineral, which is characterised by " spirit ", of which ethics and civilisation are the expression. Otto played with the significance of " personality ". Titius maintained that the " ideals of Jesus " are the culmination of a plan which can be traced in the scientific account of natural human origins. Barth, obviously enjoying himself here, regrets that these " ideals " of love to God, love of men, and life in God's kingdom, are not more convincing phenomena of humanity, and wonders why no Apologist has yet used the facts that men alone trouble to laugh or to smoke! A survey of the British scene would be useful. Philosophers too have made their suggestions. Idealism, particularly in the form which derives from Fichte, has affected the current conception of man, and its limitations easily give rise to work such as that of Jaspers. Naturalist, ethical-idealist, and existentialist anthropologies are, in Barth's judgment, the most important contributions of late to the search for self-knowledge. And there is much to be learned by the theologian who makes his way critically through the best work. But it is not by " Apologetics " that he will fulfil his task. Brunner, no less than Zöckler, Otto, and Titius, fails to reach the true subject, man, when he speaks of human freedom, intelligence, responsibility, personality, historicity, and capacity for decision, in a fashion which suggests that man has a certain neutrality in respect of God's covenant-history.

Real man is disclosed by an *actual* response, an *actual* decision. And if there were no Christological foundation for anthropology, the fact of sin would preclude all knowledge of the real subject—a point which Brunner has not seen clearly enough. It is necessary to make a complete break with the notion of fixed permanent " natures ", in settled timeless relations and to think in terms of " behaving " (*Verhalten*) not of " proportion " (*Verhältnis*). What does it mean for the ontological determination of man that Jesus Christ is our neighbour on the

plane of history? To be human is a history, a " being together with God " which derives from God, rests on His choice, and is constituted by hearing His Word. Its content and its meaning is the interaction of grace and gratitude. (The soteriological reference of *χάρις* and *εὐχαριστία* depends on a prior reference in the context of creation.) From the human side, this is the being, directed towards God, of a subject whose active response is at the same time pure spontaneity. The human creature can be identified without remainder with a history whose marks are: knowledge of God, obedience to God, invocation of God, and God-given freedom. The basis for this teaching was laid in Volume II.2, and may be studied in Dr. Camfield's summary in *Reformation Old and New*, particularly ch. IV, " God's Election of Grace ".

Man is the creature with whom God binds Himself in covenant in the pre-existent Jesus Christ; the creature created *ex nihilo* by the Word of God. He is who he is by having a real history, given within the primary history (or happening) which is God's Word. In this primary history, God's creatures are protected from annihilation, actively redeemed, and enlightened; and in the history given to them, they participate in the happening of the primary history. Man's existence as a subject is existence by the grace of God, in a relation never to be dissolved and ever to be renewed; it is existence in gratitude. And however free and spontaneous it may yet be seen to be, it is wholly encompassed by God's grace. Here, however bald and unconvincing this sounds in summary, there is to my mind a " Christological correction " of the Church's doctrine of man whose implications can hardly be envisaged at this day.

We note that once the true subject has been disclosed, there is room for a science of the condition (nature in that sense) of human life; though real man will always transcend what it says. It is a science built on insights obtained from sources other than the confrontation of man by his fellow-man Jesus. It will exhibit man's *capacity* to be what theological anthropology says he *is*. Natural science, displaying man's capacity to exist in his cosmic environment; ethical idealism, displaying his capacity to be the subject of his own life; existentialism, which shows him related to what is wholly other, and displays his capacity to exist in a history where he questions, decides, and is

called into question; theistic anthropology (philosophical theology rather than apologetics), displaying his capacity to exist as partner with God; all must be developed. But they will not yield an autonomous ontology of man.

Now follows a detailed discussion of human existence, which is manifestly determined as that of a person with persons, as an existence of soul and body, and as temporally ordered life. This, it is well to remember, is an exploration of faith, and a criticism of its expression from within faith. In his engaging *Vorwort* Barth points out that he has followed a road to theological knowledge of man which no previous theologian has chosen to follow, and that his work carries the blemishes of all such pioneering. In respect of one article, " Der Mensch und die Menschheit ", dealing with the individual, societies, and society, he has not seen his way through, and so has suppressed what he wrote. He does not claim to have included all the matters which fall within an orderly theological doctrine of man. And he has had to devote much space to Biblical exegesis where his professional colleagues have not yet fulfilled their dogmatic responsibilities as exegetes. He has found, however, liberation from the distorting fetters of traditional thought on the matter, and is acutely sensitive to the challenge of modern thinking, and the result is that familiar ideas are set in new and illuminating contexts, with effects that one may hope to see in more " popular " writing. These three sections, 45-47, are books in themselves—the last one a substantial volume of 250 large pages—and cannot be adequately reviewed.

45. That real man is appointed by God for life with God finds ineradicable expression in the fact that his creaturely being is being in encounter —between I and Thou, between Man and Woman. In this encounter he is human, and his humanity is the likeness of his Creator's being. It is being which is related to God in hope.

46. Through the Spirit of God, man is the subject, the form, and the life, of a material organism; he is the soul of his body—both, completely and simultaneously: in irremovable distinction, in inseparable unity, in indestructible order.

47. Man exists in the time of his present, past, and future life, which is appointed for him. The boundary of his being, behind and before, is the eternal God, his Creator and Covenant-partner. He is the hope wherein man is permitted to live in his appointed time.

The problem in these sections is to see how the form of human life is related to that theological determination of human

creatures which is discerned Christologically. The thought in the sections is governed respectively by studies of " Jesus, man for the rest of men ", " Jesus, complete man ", " Jesus, Lord of time ". It is important not to ease the problem by treating sin as an ontological possibility. Man's present existence is a token of what he really is in God's knowledge. We must not speak as though sin had replaced God's creature by another creature and so annulled the Covenant. It is necessary to understand human existence from these three aspects by a method which truly discovers in sinful man a continuum of God's creature.

Man determined as God's covenant-partner

The solidarity of Jesus with His fellow-men is integral to His human reality. Its depth is exposed by consideration of the verb σπλαγχνίζεσθαι, which points to an act of compassion which is not, so to speak, cultivated in an individual in order to bring himself into solidarity with his fellows. Rather does it imply that He takes His being, *qua* man, from those (fallen) men to whom He gives Himself completely. And thus the " kindness and love for man of God our Saviour appeared " (Titus 3.4). In Jesus, man for the rest of man, is the *Imago Dei*; for in this being of Jesus we see also the Being of God.

Allowing for the speciality of the life Jesus lived, we must approach the matter of the general life of humanity by seeing it as that *for* which Jesus is all that He is. But we cannot escape the implication that there is a common form of existence in which it is possible for Jesus to be thus, i.e. to be for the rest of men. It is existence as God's covenant-partner. But man is God's covenant-partner, not in virtue of an inherent potentiality for entering into covenant, nor in virtue of any claim he can make, but solely because *Jesus is for him.* The being of man is thereby determined as co-being with his fellow-man. (Note that this being is constituted by the relatedness of singular subjects, and only under that condition is it found in pluralities.) The notion of egocentric man must therefore be eradicated from Christian anthropology, and no one saw this more clearly than Nietzsche. His clear-sighted attack, analysed on pp. 266-290, is a summons to more responsible theological thinking at this point.

The analysis of " being-in-encounter " cannot easily be summarised. Much that has been written of man's nature, which purports to speak of it from the possibilities which are peculiarly open to man, fails of its purpose, because, in all that pertains to man-in-himself (i.e. not in concrete encounter with a neighbour), he can be either human or inhuman. That which is definitive of humanity appears through the achievement of encounter. The moments of human existence which demand attention are, therefore:

(*a*) seeing one another with the eyes—a moment which bureaucracy rules out;
(*b*) speaking and hearing—a moment corrupted by propaganda, the inflation of verbal currency, and loss of confidence in speech;
(*c*) lending a helping hand—an activity which can, unfortunately, be simulated without any breach in the autarchy of one's life;
(*d*) enjoying these congenial activities—a moment which is denied where encounter is marked by indifference or resentment.

Barth draws out the truth of personal relationship with a power of which few in Britain might think him capable. And then he insists that he has not been talking about Agape. In a most interesting discourse on Christian love (pp. 329-344), he corrects the fashion of the last ten years to write off Greek life and thought as hostile to the Gospel, and to force the contrast of Eros and Agape. There is a *tertium quid*, humanity, and of that we must speak from this foundation, to enable all men positively to appreciate what they are by creation.

In the man-woman relationship, the one point where there is structural differentiation between human beings, the continuum of God's creature in sinful humanity is manifest. Barth said a great deal about this in his previous volume, and it has received a certain amount of exposition and comment (cf. H. Hirschwald, " The Teaching of Karl Barth on the *Imago Dei* ", *The Presbyter*, 4th qr., 1947). The section on this demands a review to itself, more especially because of the interesting account given of the exegetical basis in Genesis 2.18-25 and the Song of Songs.

Thus man's existence is determined as the being of God's covenant-partner. By nature we are covenant-partners, but this is only true and only knowable because, in the history of

His free grace, God has made us His covenant-partners. There is no point of departure here for Natural Theology. But in this, our permanent and continuing humanity, man is in the Image of God, an existence not destroyed by sin but maintained inalienably by reason of our *hope*, i.e. the objective grounding of human existence in the Gospel grace. In developing this *Imago Dei* concept, it is of course fundamental to think of analogy of *relations*, and not in terms of the Thomist *analogia entis*. We exist in the Image of the Living God who Himself confronts Himself to become one God in the *koinonia* of the Holy Spirit. And, as we at once go on to see, it is through this same Spirit that human existence is rendered possible.

Man as Soul and Body

Human existence is being in encounter with God and with fellow-man. The term " soul " refers to its *Dasein*, as " body " refers to its *Sosein*. There is in the Bible only an incidental basis for the use of these terms, and in this matter the theses of non-theological science are intensely relevant. We begin, therefore, from contemplation of " Jesus the complete man ", noting that language which (in Fourth Gospel terminology) would seem appropriate only to the Logos is used of this *man*. Two things stand out. First, the soul-body distinction, which carries with it in our thought the distinctions of internal from external, and of intelligible from sensible, is manifestly a provisional one. Jesus is in no sense a compound of two kinds of being. Secondly, the life which Jesus lives in the flesh is one from which all trace of disorder has vanished because it is under His control. The novelty of this manhood is interpreted through what is said of His relation to the Holy Spirit—a relation with the *abiding* Holy Spirit, in distinction from the manhood which is possible in virtue of partial gifts of the Spirit. Human nature has been degraded to " flesh "—soul and body lacking Logos—but the triumph of His incarnation is the rectifying of sinful flesh, so that human existence is established in peace and order. The soul of man is the soul of a body, and his body is the body of his soul. This ordered distinction in unity has analogies (and no more than analogies) in the co-existence of God and man in Christ, in the co-existence of Jesus and His Church, and, in less accessible form, in the duality of heaven and earth, justi-

fication and sanctification, Gospel and Law, faith and works, preaching and sacrament (the Word is never *signum audibile*, though the sign is *verbum visibile*), creed and orthodoxy, Church and State. Those who are tempted to systematise doctrine from this point of view should be careful not to extend the analogy to Creator and creature, nor to grace and sin.

The existence of man as soul of his body is established, constituted, and preserved by God, and this truth is expressed by saying that he has spirit. Jesus is man as Messiah and as Son of God. *Because* He is Messiah and Son of God, the Holy Spirit indwells His manhood completely. (To invert this statement would be to admit Adoptionism.) Upon this ground, all men are granted to have Spirit and to participate in the manhood which He is. But, remembering that the Covenant is " the inner ground of creation ", the statement that " man is in that he has Spirit " means that he is established in a covenant-role. His existence is by God's free grace. As living man, whose body is not a corpse and whose soul is not a shade, his existence is preserved before death and saved beyond death through this free grace whereby God is for him. It is to be understood in the same perspective as the existence of a prophet or judge, of a member of Christ's body or of the Messiah Himself. And this grace of God in creation extends over body as completely as over soul. The term " Spirit " therefore, which points to these truths, has as its peculiar meaning God's being and action for men, whereby the soul is awakened as the life of the body which man is. This action is, however, related immediately to soul, and to the body through the soul. The term " Spirit " can therefore, in certain contexts, be used of "soul ". But it may never be taken to mean something identified with man in himself, a third element in his constitution. It is identical with God and shares His immortality. A text such as Eccl. 12.7 brings no " comfort of immortality " to men. If the term be construed with reference to the breath which makes life possible, the breather with whom alone it can be identified is God. As breathed by man, it is not part of his identity as are soul and body.

Barth turns then to consider man's existence as soul and body from three points of view: soul and body in mutual involution, in distinction, and in order.

Soul and body must be *conceived* together. The dichotomy must be transcended (as, for instance, that of God and man can never be).[1] The inner structure of human creatureliness discloses two poles, one creative and spiritual, the other created and natural, but together (a togetherness of nature, not of grace) within a creaturely whole. This wholeness is the ground of man's being a Subject, and so a being in covenant-relation with God. To make clear the fact that soul is not a continuation within man of the divine Being and Action denoted by Spirit, one may note that soul must be soul of a body, whereas Spirit needs no such complement. The existence of soul is the existence of a creature with its own being and action; it is the self-maintaining life of a corporeal being; the life of a genuine subject, and therefore the life of a body which is spatial and material. This unity in conception of soul and body is developed to serve as a corrective to three major misconceptions: the abstract dualist approach of Greek anthropology (followed frequently in the Fathers): abstract monism of the materialist kind; abstract monism of the spiritualist kind. The last is an erroneous attitude more widespread than one had perhaps realised. It is to be regretted that Barth does not give a more extended examination of the first.

But if soul and body are to be conceived without separation, it is equally important that they be conceived without confusion. The subjectivity of man involves a centre at which his life happens, and a periphery where it is articulated. Soul and body are to be understood together as the potentiality of his being in the Word of God, which Spirit makes actual. Their differentiation becomes important when we recognise that the being of man as man is to be self-conscious and accountable to oneself. And here we reach something of which we are sure in the case of man, but of which we are by no means sure in the case of animals. We do not know how they have Spirit, nor that they have soul unified with body. The right differentiation of soul and body in man discloses the seat of his power to recognise God as other than himself, and the seat of his capacity for action in that situation.

[1] The God-man dichotomy can never be transcended *in conception*, but *is* transcended in the Person of Jesus Christ, and there alone. The " togetherness " of God and man is of grace, never of nature.

The being of man is *Vernehmendes Wesen* (being which comes to an understanding by hearing, questioning, perceiving, etc.). The Bible has no interest in epistemology for its own sake. Its concern is that men should in fact know God. But it is important to discuss man's capacity for knowledge in general terms, since God regularly treats with men indirectly by signs. In fact, human knowledge and understanding is alienated from its proper content, God, and by talking of an abstract capacity for knowledge as such, there is danger lest we give to this sinful understanding a relative justification. The Bible does provide directives for an analysis of human nature from this point of view however. God acts so that man *encounters* Him and *acknowledges* Him, the latter being an act of acceptance in which man becomes himself. There is warrant therefore for our distinguishing the act of *perceiving* (*wahrnehmen*) and the act of *thinking* (*denken*). The empirical moment in knowledge and the moment of acknowledgment are distinct, but (as we are warned in the case of the prophets and apostles) they are inseparable. The Biblical terminology does not permit an analysis into an act of purely external contemplation and one of purely internal reflection. Even the Greek terms of the New Testament are coloured from the Hebrew, so that *νοῦς*, for instance, is not purely theoretical reasoning, but " what you do in your heart ". Perceiving, however, has a special connexion with body, and thinking with soul. Body is the capacity in man to expose himself to what is other; soul the capacity to make what is other his own. Neither pole of activity is conceivable without the other. Man therefore " perceives in that he is soul of his *body*: he thinks in that he is the *soul* of his body. In such differentiation, the act of knowing is the act of the whole man who is seen in the Bible to be confronted by God." The priority of soul must be expressed by saying that soul is the agent of knowledge, the pole at which the real man comes to himself; knowledge being an act in which body only participates. Barth invites us to ponder what kind of creature it is who can be charged with " seeing yet not perceiving ".

To know God, in the Biblical sense, is also to act. It is the being of man to *desire* and to *will*. The act of willing has a special connexion with soul. It is a deliberate decision in favour of some defined relation with my object. There is a special

reference of desiring to the bodily nature of man. And the situation here is precisely parallel to the previous one. Desiring and willing are both *seelisch* (of the soul) and *leiblich* (of the body); and both are to be understood as primarily *seelisch* and secondarily *leiblich*.

The primacy of man as soul, soul of his body, has already appeared. But body is no accidental appendage of real man, nor inferior to soul. It may be thought of as the " openness " of soul. But the order established between these two poles of man's nature is important. God deals with man as with one who can *control* himself and can *serve* himself. This control by the soul and service of the body is a fact of human existence which is denoted by the terms *λόγος*, *ratio*, rationality. It is clear therefore that man must not think of himself merely as soul—as a thinking willing being; he is the controlling soul of his body. Nor must he think of himself merely as body—a perceiving desiring being; he is the body which serves his soul. In this total act, which throughout is an act of soul *and* body, he exists, a created person, for the Person who has made him. He is appointed to be God's creature and God's partner. Conceived thus, he is a being " whom God can encounter, to whom He can give His Promise and Command, whom God can make like unto Himself, in order to have intercourse with him, to bind him to Himself, and to have with him a common history " (p. 512).

Man in his time

To give even the bare bones of this last section in this context is an impossible task. British theologians are not familiar with the material involved, and unless, as is devoutly to be hoped, a translation speedily appears, a series of expository articles is called for. The time-form is characteristic of life, including the life of God. In the original uncreated time which is a perfection of His Being, past, present and future are *in* one another, not after one another as in created time. Time of this latter character is granted to man in his creation, as the form of his life. By this the world is established as a realm for free divine activity where creatures can live the life willed for them by God. The time which man has, by gift of the Creator, is such that every act of living has its moment, these acts cohere

in durations, and measured limits are appointed for the creature's life. Existence in time is characterised by a beginning, a duration, and an ending. The existence of man is then to be examined under the four headings: Time which is given; Time which is appointed; Time which begins; Time which ends. The point of departure for this examination is our knowledge of the man Jesus in *His* time. The New Testament shows Him to us as " the Lord which is, and which was, and which is to come " (Rev. 1.8), the Lord of Time.[1]

To understand how the time of Jesus is the time of God, and how the time of man is related to it, we note (p. 556 f.):

(1) That every other time begins, and so from the standpoint of earlier times it *does not yet exist.*
(2) Every other time continues (*dauert*), and so from a contemporary standpoint its reality is *limited to that duration.*
(3) Every other time ends, and so from the point of view of later time it *no longer exists.*

But the time of the man Jesus is not limited thus. The man Jesus *will be*, in that He is and was; He *is*, in that He will be and was; He *was* in that He is and will be. Thus (p. 527 f.) He lives in the lifetime which He needs, as do all men, to live as man. But He lives the life of One who represents God to man and man to God, the life of the Judge who establishes God's right before men and among them, and man's right before God and among his fellows. This life that He lives is thus not exclusive to Himself. The time in which He lives this life becomes not only His time, but the time of God's life and of men's. This time becomes the time which always was where men have lived, which always is where men live, and always will be where men shall live. He makes all men His contemporaries, though in different fashion for those who respectively live with Him from 7 B.C. to 30 A.D., live before 7 B.C., and live after 30 A.D. Thus He is the Lord of time.

The riddle of man's existence (and apparent non-existence) in the past, the present, and the future, can now be tackled

[1] Barth refers to the following books: Bultmann: *Offenbarung und Heilsgeschehen* (1941); Kümmel: *Verheissung und Erfüllung* (1945); Cullmann: *Christus und die Zeit* (1946); Marcus Barth: *Der Augenzeuge* (1946); and to Buri: *Die Bedeutung der neutestamentlichen Eschatologie für die neuere protestantische Theologie* (1935). But he provides material of his own, both exegetical and theological, which British scholars cannot afford to neglect.

from Christian faith. But it is in Jesus, and in Him alone, that we find ground for affirming the reality of its time-form. It is real because it is given to men by God, as the form of existence which He wills and creates. To be in time is to be in relation to God's eternity. This is the inner aspect of the riddle.

Its outward aspect is that man's lifetime has the character of a fixed term (*die befristete Zeit*), and discussion of this leads to further discussion of its two aspects, that it begins and ends. The second of these is the most pressing problem, but Barth does well to raise the problems involved by the former limit, beyond which " we as yet were not ", the problem of *Woher?* What is said here serves to clarify what is involved by the Christian practice of baptism. In regard to the other limit, towards which we are moving, the burning question arises whether it is the edge of the abyss—the abyss of not-being. One would expect from Barth a powerful exposition of what it means to live in the shadow of death. It is provided, with a restraint appropriate to this high matter, substantially through the medium of Biblical exegesis. But his object is to distinguish that *limiting of life's span which is natural to the human creature* from the unnatural rejection and condemnation by God towards which we are moving. That God's annihilating curse falls in the end upon sin gives to death a sting which it is impossible to alleviate by soothing words. But what is condemned and annihilated is the ontological impossibility which man is ever choosing and which is ever denied him by the gracious God. Once this is made plain—as it is in contemplation of the man Jesus—we are free to speak *positively* of the term set to man's life. For man's limited existence is not " unto himself " but unto God whose good creature he is.

In this last section I have done no more than scratch the surface of a rich vein of theology, and may even have failed to indicate properly how the vein runs. I would plead once more for the speedy appearance of a translation.

Barth's work is important not least because of the decision he has made as to the nature and method of theology. It has been a fruitful decision, and we cannot afford in Britain to neglect its fruits. But what matters more is that the challenge involved in that decision has hardly been heard yet, and the translation of this masterly book on such a live contemporary

issue could not fail to make plain what is involved. Those who have followed him in the decision about theology will have questions to ask about the work done here. They may have suggestions to make, and they cannot but be stimulated to produce in English dress books which deal with the subject on a more popular level. And for them too, the existence of the book in translation would greatly ease the task of coming to terms with it. That task I have not attempted in this review. I hope that the book, displayed even in this skeleton form, will speak for itself.

II. MAN IN THE LIGHT OF THE HUMANITY OF JESUS

by Professor J. B. SOUČEK

Translated from the Czech by the Rev. Robert Smith, B.D., Balerno

In the immense plan of his vast *Dogmatik* Karl Barth had by Spring 1948 reached the second half-volume of the third part. His life-work thus extends so far to over four thousand five hundred pages. And it is still far from finished, still in fact as near the beginning as the end, for it is now in the midst of the doctrine of Creation, which follows the Prolegomena and the doctrine of God, and has yet to be completed with the doctrine of Reconciliation and Redemption. The volume just issued deals with man as the centre of Creation, or at least as the only creature directly accessible and comprehensible to us. It is thus a contribution towards a theological anthropology.

Anyone who has the slightest knowledge of Karl Barth, or imagines that he knows him, will certainly be curious to see how he will dispose of this particular task. If there is one thing for which Barth is notorious, it is his rejection of natural theology, his opposition to any attempt to base the knowledge of faith and theological thinking on any other source than the revelation given in Jesus Christ, testified by Scripture and sealed by the Holy Spirit. Is it possible that this programme will be adequate to deal with Creation, that is, with the knowledge and explanation of the world and of man's place in the world? And what after all is the sense of this programme? Does it not result in the divorce of the realm of faith from the realm of natural life and natural knowledge, does it not perhaps involve

a certain rigidity and arbitrariness in face of the whole wealth of life and knowledge, and does it not lead eventually to dualism or asceticism?

These questions are not directly answered in the new volume, but to some extent the answer is given indirectly by the whole tone of this publication. It makes it clear that the usual summary attempts to explain the basic principles of Barth's thought are largely misleading and may easily produce distortions bordering on caricature. If we attempt in what follows to indicate the main line of this thinking on the particular theme of anthropology, we must warn the reader in advance that the work is so vast, so full of complex views and illustrations and so subtly shaded, that any attempt to summarise it, including our own, must run the risk of inadequate and inaccurate interpretation in some respect.

Now even when dealing with anthropology Barth consistently maintains his rejection of natural theology. It is not his intention first to construct a general picture of man based on his observation or reflection, a picture of human nature with its possibilities and realities, and afterwards to compare and correct this picture according to the special stand-points of Christian faith. He is firmly resolved to take the special view of Christian faith as his starting-point, and so he looks primarily not to the world and to man in general, but to Jesus Christ, and seeks to recognise man in the humanity of Jesus. The execution of this programme is such that the reader must recognise—whether he is in agreement or not—that the charge of lack of interest in the world and in man or the objection to dualistic and ascetic tendencies would be directed to the wrong address. Barth is in fact convinced that the understanding of creation, and indeed any real meeting not with abstract man but with the real man, is impossible except in Jesus Christ; but in Him this meeting and understanding of reality does exist, and therefore it is a possibility for us too. It is evident that the motive for the rejection of natural theology by Barth is just his opposition to any form of dualism; there are not two sources of final truth, and of course there are not two truths. There is no gulf or even fissure between "cosmology" and "soteriology", between creation and covenant, between our knowledge of the world and the grace of reconciliation. This unity we recognise

of course only by faith—but by faith we do indeed recognise it: we understand that creation is the outward foundation of God's covenant with man, that the covenant is the inward reason and meaning of creation. This is certainly a daring view, but it is in accord with the testimony of the Bible, and if we ignore it the structure of faith must in the end disintegrate and our thinking lose touch with the concrete reality of man.

It is advisable to add to this schematic outline of Barth's fundamental views two observations. The first is the technical reminder, that the rejection of natural theology may also be expressed in formal terms in this way, that Barth is firmly resolved to teach the priority of actuality over potentiality: God's free revelation is the primary reality and point of departure, while human reception, yes, even human receptivity, is secondary and derivative. This intellectual pattern has long been a feature of Barth's exposition, but in this book it is expressed with special emphasis and distinctness. There is here a certain formal resemblance to some tendencies of contemporary philosophy, especially to existentialism. But in his analysis of the teaching of Jaspers, Barth separates himself from this philosophy, especially by his argument that it does not really attain to the reality of man, but remains to the end imprisoned in mere potentiality. The second observation is of more general interest: it would be a mistake to deduce from Barth's fundamental principles that theology must or can ignore the results of research and study by general, scientific and philosophical anthropology. On the contrary, Barth follows this work with lively interest, and his accounts of it are not only comprehensive, but aim at the greatest possible and most positive understanding. Only he is convinced that this general anthropological study will never by itself penetrate to the essential reality of man, but only to some more or less inadequate abstraction. For of course this isolated man in and for himself, which is the object of the study of general anthropology, is an abstraction: the real man exists only in the presence of God and with his fellow-men, whom we recognise in the light of our meeting with the Man Jesus, who was Man for God and for His neighbour. The more clearly general anthropological research concedes the abstractedness and the consequent tentativeness and the ultimate inadequacy of its views, the more

useful will be the service it can render. What it can do is to discover the individual features, the phenomena of human existence, which can then, for the purpose of knowing the real man, be transformed into symptoms of real humanity.

We have already mentioned the fundamental explanation of human existence which results from Barth's assumptions. Anthropology is not the same as christology, the knowledge of man in general is not identical with the knowledge of the humanity of Jesus, but it is deduced and derived from it. That which is reality in the perfect humanity of Jesus, exists in the humanity of the rest of men as a destiny and a possibility willed by God. Here again, the attentive reader will notice that the same arrangement of reality and possibility, of actuality and potentiality applies. Jesus is Man living fully for God. Man is a creature of God, destined to live in the presence of God. That is his essential substance, beyond which there is nothing deeper. This means that he exists, not as a self-contained being, but as an historical being, a being in history. By historical Barth does not of course mean quite the same as mere historicity, in the sense of being inserted in the series of earthly events. He is concerned in the first place with the fact that man exists primarily in action in the presence of God and with God. He exists only on this basis, that God has called and is calling him into existence; and he is so called in order to live in gratitude, and in order to respond to God with his knowledge, his obedience, his worship and to do all this in freedom. This calling and destiny of man is the content of God's creative act, and with regard to this creative act we must affirm that man is good.

In his present, concrete reality, however, man is corrupted by sin—and so here everyone who is even a little versed in Christian doctrine will immediately supply the correction to this thought. Certainly Barth also supplies this correction. But the matter is not so simple with him as it usually appears to be with other theologians. We are here faced with a very difficult problem of Barth's thinking. It is not easy to express it justly, if only because in the meantime he has only dealt with this subject partially, and as it were in marginal notes, being convinced that the doctrine of sin belongs systematically to the doctrine of reconciliation. The question is approximately as follows. Barth shows more and more emphatically that

there is no balance and symmetry between grace and judgment, between election to life and rejection. Grace manifestly and finally prevails over judgment, election over rejection. In this connexion he says, that even the reality of sin must not be conceived as if it had any fixed and obvious place within the theological system. Sin is always seen in faith and in theology not as possibility, but as a fundamental impossibility, absurdity, mystery. It can only be encountered as a reality, but it cannot by any means be explained, not even by assigning it to a fixed place in theological thinking. Faith and theology can only encounter sin with ever new horror and protest. Or to put it from another point of view: sin is for faith in its deepest reality always sin covered, sin forgiven. It does not belong to the original divine creation. Already in Genesis it is said, moreover, that God created light, but not at all that He created darkness. It is said only that He divided the light from the darkness, whose existence is thus left in its mysterious and unacceptable abnormality. Theological thinking therefore must indeed take the reality of sin very seriously, but not with the absolute, deadly seriousness which the reality of reconciliation makes impossible. Therefore the doctrine of sin must never be taught as an independent theme nor yet as a central theme. And never must it be admitted, that a sinful man might succeed by his sin in carrying out a second creation, in founding an independent kingdom of evil competing with the kingdom of God. That will never succeed—and therefore it is necessary to speak even of the corruption of the original creation very plainly and seriously to be sure, but always as it were in brackets, with the consciousness that this corruption will never meet with absolute success, that it will never obliterate the primal goodness of the divine creation. These ideas are indeed difficult and of course they provoke many questions. They have also been the object of sharp criticism on the part of some Lutheran theologians, who have the impression that Barth underestimates the reality of what the Bible calls the demonic world. Meantime we may at least draw attention to them and add, that they may provide an explanation for the peculiar positiveness and hopefulness, which pervade all Barth's recent contributions to general human problems, and also for the breadth and fervour of his interests.

Man, however, does not exist only in the presence of God. As Jesus was also Man for His fellow-man in His sacrifice and in His whole existence, so every man is called and destined to be, not indeed *for* his fellow-man (this only Jesus in the perfection of His humanity can achieve) but *with* him. Man is not created for solitude, but for community, for existence with his counterpart, also with his human counterpart. According to Barth's exegesis it is in this that the image of God consists: as God is not and does not want to be alone, but exists even in His innermost divinity as the love of the Father to the Son, so too man is not, must not be solitary. The greatest denial of humanity and the greatest curse of man is the attempt to understand humanity as the essence, quality or structure of solitary man. " Humanity without neighbour " is a profound error, of which Nietzsche was the greatest prophet. To him Barth devotes a long exposition, kindly and appreciative too, but in the essential point he denounces him more strongly than any other thinker with whom he deals in his remarkable digressions. Nietzsche, however, is not alone in this. He only expresses with rare consistency and sincerity—and in this lies his strength—tendencies of the modern age which have been widespread since the Renaissance, tendencies more moderately and temperately proclaimed, for example, by Goethe, and which have interfered so much with public, political, and social programmes and endeavours. Everything will depend, humanly speaking, on the supersession of this " humanity without fellow-man " by a true humanity, with a vision of the reality of the concrete fellow-man. But is this possible on any other basis than the knowledge that community is not something extraneous to man, but forms his innermost substance, because it is the very core of man's creaturehood, as it was revealed in the Man Jesus? The natural expression and basic form of this original substance is the fact, that man was created not solitary and individual, but as man and woman. This, according to Gen. 1.27, is the concrete content of the image of God, for which man was created. On tens, indeed on hundreds of pages (already in the preceding volume III. 1) Barth confirms with Biblical exegesis and develops with bold imagination the wonderful picture of what human existence means in this, the only natural and original division of mankind. Here in nature the loving

purpose of God is reflected. Here in an original pattern the primal, human substance of all human relationships is laid down. It is an existence in which human beings see each other face to face, in which they obey each other, and converse with each other, and help each other, and do it all gladly, with spontaneity, joy and freedom. This is what it means to share natural, human existence. In this connexion Barth turns sternly against those theologians, who imagine that they are exalting the glory of the grace of God when they slander man and deny him any positive possibilities. The punishment for that will always be that such theology ends by belittling and distorting in some way the image of the real, essential grace of God, and smuggling into it these same human characteristics—but *merely* human characteristics—which were so churlishly denied to natural man. In this connexion too he takes his stand against a widespread theological fashion, and defends the Greek, or Hellenistic spirit, which is certainly demonic when perverted, but which still only expressed powerfully one side of human nature: its spontaneity, joyfulness, freedom, which is the meaning of the Greek conception *eros*, and which is the basis of the undeniable fact, that in the civic, political sphere too ancient Greece is the motherland of freedom.

We have so far only given account of the ideas in the first half of the new volume. The last two extensive chapters are devoted on the one hand to the existence of man as the soul of his body, and on the other hand to his existence in his own given and limited and therefore also finite time. We can only point out briefly that these two closing chapters are linked together and have a common underlying tone. Soul and body are not the same, but they cannot be abstracted and separated from each other. In the Bible man is a unity; soul and body are a unified creation of God, or they exist on this basis, that man is given a spirit, which is the Biblical expression for God in His movement towards man. Any sort of abstraction, whether idealistic or materialistic, is false, and the concreteness of the Biblical view does not fit any theory of parallelism or of the mutual influence of soul and body. Equally impossible is the Greek theory of the soul as an immortal substance separable from the body. By no means. Man exists as the soul of his body, and the soul too is mortal together with the body. His

hope is not in the permanence of his imaginary higher substance, but only in the resurrection, that is, in God Himself.

In a further chapter the same theme is developed in dealing with human limitation in time, with human finiteness. This finiteness we know of course in its concrete form as death, and it is joined with the reality of divine judgment on sinful man, and does not therefore belong in this form to the goodness of God's creation. But if it is true that Jesus Himself bore the curse of death and wiped it out by His own death, then finiteness itself loses its cursedness, and becomes a natural sign of human dependence on grace. It is thus something which can and must be accepted in peace and with gratitude. The hope of the believer is not a kind of endless prolongation of his existence in time. It is that he in his finiteness (and thus already only the man that has been), will meet with God in the "moment" of resurrection (1 Cor. 15.51) and will have a share in His eternity, which is essentially different from existence in time.

This again is a very difficult exegesis. The reader will inevitably ask the question, whether the soberness of Biblical faith, rejecting all illusions about the imaginary higher elements of man, and accepting the earthliness and finiteness of his being, is not here too finely polished. Is not the Christian hope too much narrowed down, until it becomes a quite unimaginable moment of meeting with God, or an elevation of the mere finite, past, and not-to-be-continued existence of man into the light of God's grace, God's forgiveness, and God's purpose? Perhaps it will be necessary to wait for further explanation of Barth's views on this matter in the next volumes of the *Dogmatik*. Meanwhile it is possible to remind non-theologians, that this theology certainly cannot be defined as abstract spiritualism or dualism; and to remind theologians, that in Barth's expositions of the finiteness of man there are obviously introduced some consequences of the rejection of the doctrine of purgatory. Man is given only this limited and finite time to live and to reach a decision about his eternal existence. He is not given any prospect of a continuation and prolongation of this unique temporal existence. This has, of course, fundamental importance for ethics. It gives to all decisions a deep earnestness and urgency which would have been lacking, if our hope had been deliver-

ance from the limitation of time; instead of which we may and must trust only and solely in the eternal God.

Altogether we have before us a work which is monumental not only in extent. Certainly there is in its execution much that is problematic, flung out in the rough, sometimes with too much of genius and massiveness. None the less it does prove, that in his daring decision to seek a foundation and anchorage for theological thinking only in revelation in Jesus Christ and in the act of faith in Him, Barth has been given an inner freedom resulting in great breadth of outlook, which does indeed regard nothing human as alien, and a versatility and at the same time a peculiar justice and appreciativeness even in judging thinkers very far removed from him. This combination of definiteness and breadth gives to Barth's work a peculiar attraction, and makes him an important orientation-point and corrective. For without such a corrective theological thought tends to wander into blind alleys and all sorts of snares. To this must be added our simple thanks for the welcome, reliable and considered instruction about a number of important theological and philosophical thinkers, and not least for the many extensive Biblical exegeses, which, in spite of all the occasional arbitrariness and lack of finish, still penetrate to the heart of the matter. In sum, here is a work which Protestant theology for long decades will not be able to ignore, and must reckon with one way or another.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Church's Ministry. By T. W. Manson. Hodder and Stoughton. 6s. net.

The importance of this little book is out of all proportion to its size. It is made up of three lectures delivered before the University of London, and a fourth, the C. J. Cadoux Memorial Lecture delivered at the Yorkshire United Independent College, Bradford, together with an Epilogue setting forth their main theses. The subject was suggested by the symposium on the Apostolic Ministry edited by the Bishop of Oxford, which is subjected to searching criticism. But the main purpose is " not critical but constructive ", to be a contribution to the discussion of the problem of reunion. " The starting point is the simple fact that the real problem is created not by what the several denominations lack, but by what they possess; not by their failures, which are undeniable, but by their achievements, which are equally undeniable and much more impressive." In the Epilogue it is contended that " there is a deep sense in which what we call ' our unhappy divisions ' are not really divisions ", and that " the true task of those who care about ' reunion ' is that of realising more deeply and expressing more perfectly a unity which already exists . . . in spite of divisions ".

To achieve this end Dr. Manson thinks the first step should be the framing of an adequate doctrine of the Church, and regrets that the Section dealing with Ministry and Sacraments at the Faith and Order Conference, Edinburgh, 1937, lost itself in the discussion of conciliatory but ambiguous formulas. Actually the doctrine of the Church was the topic assigned to Section II which, however, was also bogged in the ambiguities of the terms, " given " and " gathered " Church. It proved impossible to get the Orthodox and Anglican delegates to realise that they were not the only champions of the " givenness " of the Church.

Dr. Manson suggests that " the way to the solution of the problem is to take seriously the fact that the Church is the Body of Christ, and to work out the implications of that fact reverently and ruthlessly ". But is not this " fact " really an analogy and, like all analogies, liable to be pressed too far? Besides, as Professor de Zwaan of Leiden has shown, in an article referred to on p. 23 n., the New Testament uses five groups of symbols, not this one only, to describe the Church, most but not all underlining its organic nature. As

the Body of Christ, says Dr. Manson, " the Church is one in virtue of His ownership of all its parts ". But it is hard to see how it can be conceived as *organically* one with all its separated organisations; especially if one rejects, as Dr. Manson decisively does, such aid as is offered by distinguishing between the Visible and the Invisible Church. He does not handle the question of the varieties of relation in which parts can stand to wholes, except so far as it is raised in a limited way within the Independent denomination (pp. 92 ff.). Nevertheless he is not entirely ruthless. He hesitates over the phrase " continuation of the Incarnation ", which he finds " true but more awe-inspiring than illuminating ", and prefers to say " more modestly " that " the Church's ministry is a continuation of the Messianic Ministry of Jesus ". The ambiguity of this, as stated summarily in the Epilogue, is removed in the text where it is made clear that by " the Church's Ministry " is meant the ministry exercised by the Church as a whole and not that of any office within it. Also by " the Messianic Ministry of Jesus " is meant primarily the Work He did in the days of His flesh. " The Ministry of Jesus *is* the Kingdom of God spelt out in human terms." " In that Kingdom service is not a stepping stone to nobility: it *is* nobility, the only kind of nobility that is recognised." The Church is therefore primarily " the guardian of the tradition set up by the Messianic Ministry of Jesus ", and its task is to continue His work of evangelisation, love and service in His spirit. But of course that is not all. Since the Resurrection the Church is also " the dwelling place of the Living Christ ". It has the promise of His abiding presence so that the continuation of the Messianic Ministry means its continuation " *by the Messiah* ". His is the " essential ministry "; all others are derivative, dependent, functional. The Church is not bound to its Founder by a tenuous and lengthening chain of alleged successors of the Apostles. It has Christ in its midst to commission and to sustain its ministry to the world's need. On the one hand this saves a bishop from possibly thinking of himself as, in Dr. Kirk's phrase, " a cog in the diocesan machine "! On the other hand it exalts every ministry to its true status as Christ-given and Christ-dependent. Here also is the explanation of the undeniable fact that the Living Christ " has been pleased to work effectively through all kinds of ministries, episcopal and non-episcopal ".

So far we have spoken only of the first lecture, but it is fundamental. Those on the Apostolate, the Settled Ministry and Non-episcopal Ministries are simply the working out of the principles laid down. Little need be said of the last two. Dr. Manson gives his own account of the life and organisation of the primitive Church " arranging the fragments (of evidence) joining up those that will

join and placing as best we may the isolated bits ". Needless to say his arrangement is masterly, and is free from the forcing of the evidence which is inevitable when a preconceived hard-and-fast system must be found at any price. The final lecture is addressed primarily to Independents and contains what a Presbyterian must properly say to them. But that on the Apostolate is of great interest and importance. The Jewish usage of *Shaliach* is fully investigated and its bearing on New Testament usage is made clear. During the earthly Ministry of Jesus the Twelve and the Seventy are held to have been *Sheluchim* in full accord with Jewish practice and idea. They were representatives of Jesus and witnesses to His ministry. After the Resurrection the qualification for Apostleship was to have seen the Risen Lord and others besides the Twelve claimed and exercised Apostleship on this ground. But the Twelve remained a determinate group owing their special status to Christ's appointment as an inalienable thing which can be lost not by death but only by apostasy. All of Apostolicity that is heritable is the missionary task, which belongs to the Church as such. It is consequently the Church which is apostolic as it fulfils its task through functional organs called to this special ministry through the Living Lord Himself.

J. H. S. Burleigh

Catholicity. Dacre Press, Westminster. 2s. 6d.

This pamphlet of forty-six pages is sub-titled *A Study in the Conflict of Christian Traditions in the West*, being a report presented to the Archbishop of Canterbury and bearing a foreword by him. Its sponsors are a group of well-known Anglo-Catholics who aim to show that " the problem of reunion is that of the recovery of the *wholeness* of tradition " (p. 17). It has importance far beyond its slender proportions and ought to be read by all who are engaged in the ecumenical movement.

They begin by grounding their conception of catholicity in an idea of *wholeness* which they find in the Biblical and Christian tradition, and speak of it as " that *wholeness* wherein the Gospel of Redemption rests upon the groundwork of Creation, and the supernatural Church stands over against the order of Nature, which, no less than the Church, is of God " (p. 16). There is no doubt that here we have a profounder attempt than any hitherto contemplated by Anglicans to get to grips with the objective and theological basis of catholicity, and here too there is some attempt to understand this in its Biblical eschatological context. It is a similar conception of

wholeness that lies at the heart of the Reformed Faith, and Reformed Churches will therefore welcome this shifting of the discussion on to ground where they have always felt the important decisions must be made.

There is a great deal in the first chapter that we may gladly endorse: the insistence that the Church is the Body of Christ, and as such is prior to the Church as a visible society—though there still lurks here the Roman confusion between the Kingdom of Heaven and the Church; the givenness both of the unity of the Church and the sanctification of the individual in a context of eschatology not of evolution, of growth not of progress; the inevitable tensions between the divine nature of the Church and the sinfulness of its members, between the historical once-for-allness of the Church and its abiding union with the divine life; the participation of the local Church in the whole heavenly congregation and Church of the First-Born. Our only quarrel with the substance of the first chapter is that it is not thought through radically enough on Biblical lines. The greatest single weakness is a failure to grasp properly the basic eschatological tension in which the New Testament doctrines of the Church, the new creation, election, justification, sanctification, etc., are cast, and therefore the confusion between eschatological fulfilment and temporal continuity. In regard to the relation between creation and redemption they do not see, for example, as the late Professor H. R. Mackintosh used to point out, that Christ's function in creation is proleptically conditioned by His function as Redeemer; nor do they see that the order: Christ-the Church-faithful individuals may be just as wrong as the order: Christ-faithful individuals-the Church, because such temporal sequence, one way or the other, impugns the eschatological wholeness of the Church, as does the division of baptism into two *moments* of salvation (where confirmation either injures the completeness of baptism in its once-for-all character or anticipates its fulfilment in the Parousia).

The essential eschatological doubleness which in the New Testament receives its decisive expression in the giving of *two sacraments only* is destroyed by the admission of other sacraments, such as the sacrament of penance—which shows a radical misunderstanding of the New Testament teaching about eschatological once-for-allness and eschatological continuity which come together in realised *wholeness* only when the teleological end (*telos*) and the eschatological end (*eschaton*) are fulfilled in one another at the Second Advent of Christ. These two sacraments have been given to us precisely in order that we may realise here and now through baptism the *wholeness* of Christ, and the *wholeness* of our salvation (e.g., Col. 2.10 f.) and yet that we may understand through the Eucharist, in which we communicate

again and ever again in the body and blood of the whole Christ until He come, that the fullness of Christ is the final goal of the Church (e.g., Eph. 4.13). To introduce a third or other sacraments is to strike at the very heart of the New Testament Gospel and its whole teaching about creation and redemption.

There are several other points that need further clarification:

(1) What do they mean by " primitive *wholeness* "? The only primitive wholeness that the Reformed Churches recognise is the once-and-for-all *wholeness* of Jesus Christ in whom God and man are at one, and the gathering together in Him of heaven and earth, things visible and invisible in the new creation, all understood on the analogy of the hypostatic union carried through the Cross and Resurrection into an abiding perfection. Is that what the pamphlet means by " primitive *wholeness* " or does it confound it, as it would appear to do, with a primitive historical *wholeness*? Should we not rather think of *wholeness* as Christ Himself, Christ the Truth, and insist that the only way toward reunion is to seek earnestly the absolute Lordship of Jesus Christ (cf. Visser T'Hooft, *The Kingship of Christ*, p. 77 f.)? Truth is One in Christ, and there is a dogmatic *wholeness* which may be gained only as every doctrine is thoroughly criticised and corrected christologically. For this reason the Reformation stands for a thoroughgoing critique of all doctrines, especially the doctrines of the Church, justification, and the sacraments, in terms of christological dogma formed on the basis of Scripture. It seeks the *wholeness* of Christ on the basis of the New Testament Revelation and sees the problem of reunion to-day as the recovery, under the Lordship of Christ, of a dogmatic *wholeness* at the centre of which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

(2) What does " Catholicity " mean by the uniqueness of the Apostolate and by Tradition? We readily agree that the Apostolate was integral to the existence of the new Israel, but as such it belongs to the ἐφάπαξ of the New Testament Revelation and indeed of the Incarnation. Upon this rock, Apostolic Witness (i.e. upon the Apostles themselves as witnesses of Christ the Son of God) the Church is built, and to this Apostolic Witness is given the keys of the Kingdom so that in the Apostolic Witness Jesus Christ crucified and risen completes the revelation of Himself. And so St. Paul said: " Ye are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone " (Eph. 2.20). That the Apostolate was unrepeatable, and belonged to the ἐφάπαξ of the Incarnation, was recognised by the early Catholic Church when it decided to subordinate tradition to Scripture in the formation of the Canon about the year 150 A.D., and so to make a decisive distinction

between the *Apostolic Tradition* and later tradition. The seriousness and strictness with which the Reformed Churches take that decision does not mean that they deny the continuance of a tradition, but that they insist on the sole supremacy of Scripture as the substance of the Apostolic Witness and Tradition regarded as part of the ἐφάπαξ of the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Because, like the early Church, they insist in interpreting *paradosis* in terms of *kerygma* and not *kerygma* in terms of *paradosis*, they hold that the Scriptures of the New Testament witness to Jesus Christ Himself *kerygmatically*, that is in such a way that He Himself, by the power of His Spirit, speaks to men through them, confirming the Apostles in their power of the keys, the key of the knowledge and interpretation of His own Person and Work (cf. Mk. 4.11; Lk. 8.10; Mt. 13.11; Lk. 11.52; Mt. 18.13; cf. also Cullmann, *Christus u. die Zeit*, p. 147 ff.).

(3) What do the authors of this pamphlet mean by the Body of Christ, and by the statement that the Supernatural Church is over against the order of nature? Is there not a confusion in their thought between the Body of Christ as the Body of the Risen Lord, and the Body of Christ regarded mystically as the Church? The New Testament takes care by speaking of Christ as the Head of the Body as well as saying that the Church is the Body of Christ to make it clear that there can be no question of a proposition of identity here. The relation between the Church and the Body of Christ is one of *koinonia* and *abiding*, and is eschatologically conditioned. It is thus that the Church participates in the *wholeness* of Christ, but because that *wholeness* is already whole there can be no talk of an extension of the Incarnation or historical continuity of the Body of Christ. That ought to have been clear to our authors through the doctrine of the Eucharist, but alas they interpret the Eucharist so as to leave out the essential eschatological element given to it in the New Testament.

The Reformed Churches do not deny the continuity, but because they take so seriously the New Testament teaching that the Church is already the Body of Christ, and is already the new creation whole and complete, and yet on the other hand take seriously the fact that Christ now reigns through the Word of the Gospel calling His elect Church out of the world, that they formulated their doctrine of continuity in terms of election, so as to steer clear of the idea that there can be an extension in the time of this fallen world of the risen Body of Christ Jesus or of the New Creation. No doubt we successors of the Reformation may disagree with the form they gave to the doctrine of predestination, which relegated it to some still point behind history and beyond time, and prefer to interpret it

dynamically as the action of the eternal God in Christ in time and through time, but the essential truth remains. By election or predestination the Reformed Churches teach that the New Creation is hid with Christ in God and at present is veiled behind the likeness of sinful history, nevertheless it is a New Creation in time involving soul and body, heaven and earth. That is to say, by means of the doctrine of election we refuse to identify the living continuity of the Church as the New Creation, participating in the wholeness or fullness of Christ, with the continuation of this present sinful world. It is a reality existing here and now, but yet to be revealed. In other words, we take in deep earnest the teaching of the Eucharist that every time in the fallen world we partake of Holy Communion, we communicate in the real presence of Christ in time, but we receive also the judgment of the Cross upon the forms and fashions of this passing world, and that includes the forms and fashions of the sinful historical Church. All that is contained in the doctrine of justification, as Calvin showed so clearly, which has on one side the doctrine of sacramental incorporation into the Body of Christ, but just because it teaches the wholeness of Christ, the wholeness of our sanctification as already given in this eschatological context, it refuses to teach a doctrine of justification as a process in sinful history. Had these writers really done justice to the eschatological cast of New Testament teaching they would have grasped this profound element in the doctrines of salvation and the sacraments, and the principle of the Reformation which insists that the Church lives in time essentially as the repentant Church, although in Christ she is already the Church triumphant. The error of the Roman Catholic Church in this respect is two-fold: it refuses to criticise its doctrine of the Church in terms of the Chalcedonian doctrine of the hypostatic union, and refuses to carry the thought of the hypostatic union beyond the static conception of the Greek Fathers, and to interpret it through the Work of Christ in Death and Resurrection. This cardinal error lurks in the pages of " Catholicity ", but we refuse to believe it is genuinely Anglican. On the other hand the great error of the Reformed Churches lies in the arresting of repentance, in the refusal to take justification *by faith alone* seriously enough, and therefore in their worldly and ecclesiastical self-justification. In the Church of Scotland, for example, this means such a hardening of the Presbyterian system of orders and government that it constantly becomes an obstacle to the renewing of the Church.

When the authors proceed to discuss the contribution of " Orthodox Protestantism " they try to present a general description such that Protestants themselves may recognise to be truthful and fair-minded. Certainly this part of the document ought to be read and

pondered by all the Churches concerned if only to incite the theological penitence of which we all stand in such need. And yet it must be said quite plainly that we do not recognise our Reformed convictions here. They have cast Protestant teaching into such subjective terms and have failed woefully to understand the objective depth which the Reformation gave to the doctrines of the Church and Salvation particularly, while the suggestion that the Reformers neglected Nicaea and denied the doctrine of the incorporation into Christ, shows how little these scholars know about Reformation theology. A great deal of this we can pass over, but when it comes to their handling of what they choose to call " two radical errors " we are amazed!

(1) It is astonishing that scholars of reputation have allowed their names to go forward attached to a document which speaks of the catastrophic pessimism of the Reformed doctrine of man, and the retreat from history which it involved! In regard to the Reformed doctrine of sin which is couched in total terms, they ought to have known, as all the writings of the great Reformers make clear (e.g., Luther in *De Servo Arbitrio*) that a true doctrine of total depravity is a corollary of the doctrine that Christ died for all men, and for all of each man. It is because salvation and grace are *total* involving a new creation, that Christian theology must speak of sin in *total* terms. This is part of the New Testament doctrine of *wholeness*. These writers deny this *wholeness*, and assert a very sectional, and inadequate doctrine of sin. It is evidence again that their statement of New Testament *wholeness* is radically defective. Here we recall the words of a former Archbishop of Canterbury: *Nondum considerasti quanti ponderis sit peccatum.*

It was because the Reformers viewed the fall of man as a fall from nature to de-nature, and not, as Romanism held, from something superadded to nature to pure nature, that they affirmed an optimistic view of human nature, and denied the contemptuous slur cast upon God's handiwork by the Roman equation of man as he is with the *pura naturalia*, a slur which is evident in such practices as world-denying monasticism and celibacy. What could be more pessimistic than to view sin as that which can be naturally propagated by sexual concupiscence? It was precisely because the Reformers thought of sin as defection from the will of God, the will of God for men—therefore from the high dignity of human nature, as Calvin put it—that they revolted from medieval pessimism and other-worldly quietism and escapism, and liberated the greater part of Western Europe for the most progressive advances in the whole of human history.

There is one other small point which ought to be mentioned.

On page 24 the statement is made that " the discipline of rational thinking can never be shirked without disaster ". That is true indeed, but it is hardly for these Anglicans to develop that into a charge against their Reformed brethren! What work of repute in dogmatic theology has there been produced in Anglicanism between Pearson and Quick that can begin to be compared with the immense literature of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, not to mention the other Protestant Churches? Of all Western Churches is it not the Anglican that has shirked most the discipline of systematic theology? Of all modern Churchmen are not the Anglo-Catholics (with several notable exceptions) the most afraid to look in the face modern critical philosophy (particularly since Kant), the most ready to take refuge behind the medieval ramparts of scholasticism? I can think of no greater disaster within the Anglican Communion than the dominance in it of men who refuse to discipline their liturgical and patristic studies both by the rational thinking of modern critical philosophy and by the arduous work of systematic theology!

(2) The other alleged error is the dissociation of justification from sanctification. One can understand how this mistaken interpretation of Reformed teaching has arisen in the minds of those who cast that teaching into subjective terms, but the whole significance of Reformed teaching on justification and sanctification is that *Christ Himself* is our sanctification and our justification, and that therefore these are *given* to us—that is, some doctrine of imputation is unavoidable, unless one adopts a crassly heretical doctrine of identity. Just because Christ is our sanctification and justification our possession of these is through incorporation into Christ and union with Him, as no one has insisted more strongly than Calvin. But just because Christ is sanctification and justification, these are gifts in the sense in which the gift is identical with the Giver, and so appropriation of them can no more be a temporal process than Christ Himself. In other words just because in Christ we are given sanctification and justification in the form of the *whole Christ*, we cannot add to them. It is a matter of *tota gratia*, and *tota gratia* both in the sense of *data*, and in the sense of *danda*—hence once again the two sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. This *tota gratia* is precisely the *wholeness* which the Roman Church has so deplorably lost.

At the start of this pamphlet we are reminded of the words from St. John, " Sanctify them in the Truth; Thy Word is Truth ", which Anglo-Catholics apparently are apt to forget. This is, however, precisely what the Reformed Churches have tried to stress: the experience of sanctification through the Word. It is in obedience

of heart and mind to the Word proclaimed and made flesh, through which the whole Christ communicates Himself to us, that we exercise ourselves in sanctification, for that living Word acts creatively upon us and gives us constantly to feed upon Christ (John chs. 6 and 15). The sponsors of this pamphlet remark that the Reformed stress upon the Word has a detrimental effect upon right relation to worship. That criticism ought to apply equally to St. John's Gospel which stresses more than any of the others the Word, and yet gives the fullest place to worship—precisely because it is through the Word that Christ comes to us personally and worship reaches its focal point and culmination in personal encounter with the living Christ. It is then that Holy Communion has its rightful place crowning faith with vision and enacting in our flesh and blood the real presence of Christ. The Eucharist as the sacrament of the Word made flesh contains the Reformed doctrine of sanctification.

It is a wonder that these Anglicans so easily ignore their own great Anglican heritage in teachers such as Cranmer, Hooker, Pearson, Andrewes, Hall, and indeed of their own *Thirty-nine Articles* where a Reformed doctrine of justification and sanctification is taught. If however they are unwilling to read their own theologians one would like to suggest to them that they might listen to one who is more authentically " Catholic " (in their sense) than they themselves are, such as Professor Ernst Gaugler of the Old Catholic Faculty in Bern who gives an admirable exposition of justification and sanctification in his recent *Römerbrief* (where they will find too a sound doctrine of *shaliach*!).

There is no space here to dwell upon the failure in these pages to make any real approach to the Reformed doctrine of the Church, or the discussion of Liberalism, and the post-Tridentine Papal Communion, throughout which there emerges again and again a fundamental failure to grasp the meaning of the eschatological element so thoroughly purged from Catholicism at the Council of Trent. There follows, however, a valuable discussion of fragmentation and synthesis of Christian truth in which there is real evidence of theological penitence, so rare in these days, and a desire to achieve a synthesis at a level profounder than that which usually occupies the discussion of reunion. There is much in this chapter that those engaged in the ecumenical movement could well lay to heart, not to speak of the several Churches involved. Nevertheless it is difficult to escape the conclusion that this sort of synthesis which has to do with fragments of truth and a desire to seek an underlying and primitive unity fails to take account of the differing attitudes of approach to the truth which characterise East and West, Roman Catholicism, and the Churches of the Reformation, and fails also to recognise that, in the

most basic sense of the Incarnation, Christ Himself is the Truth, Truth in the form of personal Being. There can be no synthesis therefore of fragments but a synthesis of a different sort will arise out of a fresh orientation to Christ Himself. He is the *wholeness* which we seek, who gives Himself to us now through the Scriptures and the Sacraments. No approach to that *wholeness* along the line that thinks of revelation or tradition as mediating truths will ultimately avail, for it will always result in fragmentation. It is not therefore the *wholeness* of tradition, but the *wholeness* of Christ which we seek, and to do that, as St. Paul said, we must even forget the things that lie behind, making ourselves of no reputation, being renewed in the spirit of our minds: that is what we mean by Reformation. The movement for synthesis envisaged in this book will be as much a patchwork remedy as those it repudiates.

The concluding section of this inquiry is informed by rather a naive belief that in the Providence of God it is through Anglicanism that such a synthesis may be achieved, for it is in the Anglican tradition more than anywhere else, they hold, that the diverse elements are brought together. However incomprehensible this is to many, and perhaps offensive to some, it is a sincere belief which in some quarters of the Church of England almost attains a messianic fervour. There can be no doubt whatsoever that the great Anglican Communion has much to offer the rest of the Christian world, and many valuable contributions from that heritage are thrown out in these pages, but only when it begins to take Biblical and dogmatic theology seriously will other Churches in the West be more inclined to learn from it. How far this particular document, in spite of the foreword by the Archbishop, really represents the genius of the Church of England, is rather doubtful, but as a member of another communion equally in need of theological penitence this reviewer would like to beseech his Anglican brethren *ἐν σπλάγχνοις Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ* to forget the things that are behind, even the great Anglican tradition, and press on toward *the wholeness of Christ Jesus*. Surely only when we all acknowledge that we are unprofitable servants even when we have done our duty will we be ready for that renewal by the living Christ in which reunion will at last be possible.

T. F. Torrance

Christian Apologetics. By Alan Richardson. S.C.M. Press. 10s. 6d.

It would be a meagre compliment to say that this is the best book of its kind that has appeared in recent years, for its importance lies in the fact that nothing of its kind has appeared since the *Apologetics*

of A. B. Bruce in 1892. We have had scores of books *of* apologetics; we have had excellent material for the construction of a system of apologetics in the works of Brunner, Karl Heim, A. E. Taylor, Streeter, John Baillie, and many others; but we have not had a full-scale book *on* apologetics, a rationale of our Christian approach to the modern world. We should be grateful that it has now been done by an Anglican scholar in so acceptable a manner.

Those of us who have been influenced by current Continental theologies of the Word have probably felt the tension created by the existence of apologetics as a branch of theology. As a student in France in the early thirties I remember hearing an impassioned lecture from an elderly professor entitled: " Pourquoi l'Apologétique?" and many of us echoed that " Pourquoi?" Why, indeed, when the Word was given, waste one's time in fruitless attempts to construct bridges from the world of secular thought? Yet there was an uneasy feeling that for a Scot to abandon this field as a disreputable relic of humanistic liberalism was to run counter to his theological traditions. And it may well be that the war-years, which confronted so many with the urgent task of talking the language of the ordinary man, of removing misconceptions about the Christian faith, and of understanding current " climates of thought ", made even the most fervid believer in a transcendent Gospel turn his attention to the means of commending it to the modern world—in other words, to apologetics. This book should do much to dispel any lingering notion that the function of apologetics is to provide a rational alternative to the response of faith. Canon Richardson is not one who believes in salvation by syllogisms, and the line of approach he suggests will be welcomed by theologians of more than one school.

It is, in fact, one of the major theses of this book that *all* human reasoning depends on a prior act of faith. *Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis*—the words on the title-page indicate the Augustinian flavour of the chapters to come. Christian truth, we are told more than once, is like the sun: it is seen in its own light. " A Christian philosophy as such is one which frankly admits that reason cannot work except by the light of revelation and unashamedly follows St. Augustine in acknowledging Christian faith as the master-light of all our seeing." Christian apologetics is therefore concerned, not with a straight-line argument to God from commonly-accepted rational principles (Canon Richardson rightly repudiates the myth of the " unaided reason "), but with the validity of the categories of theological science, and the demonstration of their adequacy to account for the facts with which they deal (the witness, the existence, of the Church), and the superiority of the Christian

" faith-principle " as interpreter of the world in which we live.

Canon Richardson vigorously defends the autonomy of theology as a science, and its right to its own categories of interpretation. He faces the charge that Christian faith is an " ideology " (which he uses in the correct sense of assumptions, often unconscious, which are the results of mass-suggestion in any particular age), and, while acknowledging the insights we owe to Marx, has no difficulty in showing that the Christian faith cannot be reasonably explained away in terms of social conditioning. " What common ideological factors could account for this impressive unity of the faith down the ages, if we have regard to the vastly different social and economic conditions of the various periods in Christian history?" " There is a knowledge of God, it would appear, that is prior to and independent of all social conditioning, and which itself is a factor that conditions the growth and decay of social systems and their ideologies."

In dealing with the historical basis of Christianity he has a refreshing passage on the fallacy of " scientifically objective history ". All history is interpretation, and the task of the Christian apologist is to show how the category of Revelation makes sense of the facts of Bible history. Canon Richardson draws a useful distinction, in evaluating the results of the critico-historical method applied to the Biblical documents, between the evolution of ideas of God, and the fundamental Biblical concept of a covenant-relationship. " The covenant-relation of man with God is the unifying factor of all the long Biblical-Christian history, and it is at least as old as Moses." Once we have accepted the necessity of an interpretative principle we are delivered from the delusion that there is an " impartial " scientific core of fact to be discovered on which faith can rest. The history of attempts to deal with the Gospel narratives in this way speaks for itself—every writer of a " Life of Jesus " has imported, willy-nilly, a principle of interpretation into his judgment, so that the Jesus who has emerged is inevitably in part a contemporary of the writer's, bearing the distinctive signs of his age. The result, in the end, has of course been a total scepticism about the possibility of knowledge of the historical Jesus, from which we have been delivered only by a fresh realisation of the Christian categories which alone can make sense of the historical data.

In the great debate concerning revelation and reason, nature and super-nature, Canon Richardson agrees with Brunner's distinction between general and special revelation, although he rejects Brunner's conception of a general revelation that is not a " saving " revelation. He would agree with the criticisms of the positions of both Barth and Brunner offered by Professor John Baillie in *Our*

Knowledge of God. He conceives of revelation as God's communication of *Himself*; first in the universal religious consciousness of mankind; then through particular historical episodes. He breaks both with the old traditional view of revelation as divine truths supernaturally communicated to men in the form of propositions, and with the " Liberal " alternative of revelation as simply the republication of universal religious truth. There are questions one would like to ask here, but the position is admirably stated, and the argument developed in a manner of which these brief comments can give little impression.

The chapters on Miracle, Prophecy, and Biblical Inspiration are both stimulating and satisfying in their honest grappling with the difficulties of the traditional views combined with a shrewd criticism of the popular modern alternatives. The author shows up the shallowness of some of the glib " re-interpretations " that we have been offered for the past fifty years, but avoids the equally irritating sophistries of the literary neo-orthodox, the converted agnostics who swallow the Athanasian Creed overnight.

It should be added that the book is charmingly written, and betrays a real acquaintance with the theological sources. The author's debt to St. Augustine is obvious, but it is refreshing to find in an Anglican scholar an appreciation of Calvin's thought based on a first-hand knowledge of the *Institutes*. The passage on the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum* is a fine example of this.

This book passes one of the strictest tests: it gains on second reading—not because of obscurity but of depth. This is priority-reading for ministers and divinity students.

David H. C. Read

The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition. By C. K. Barrett. S.P.C.K. 15s.

Why do the Gospels say so little about the Spirit? This is one of several important questions discussed with much learning by C. K. Barrett in this book.

It has two parts and ten chapters. Part I which occupies 120 of the book's 160 pages, deals with Jesus and the Spirit and discusses the Virgin Birth, the exorcisms and miracles of Jesus, His prophetic activity, etc.—so far as they concern the Spirit. Part II deals with the Church and the Spirit. The book abounds with Greek, Latin and Hebrew quotations; Mr. Barrett is obviously *au fait* with the conclusions of the latest scholars, especially Germans like Bultmann; and consequently his point of view is pretty radical. The style,

except when he digresses into long linguistic interpretations, is readable, if it is not very lucid.

The book is at once scholarly, provocative and disturbing. If we give some idea of his opening and closing chapters, the reader will know what to expect from this book.

In his opening chapter Mr. Barrett, after comparing the Birth Stories in Matthew and Luke, examines some alleged pagan parallels to the narratives—so far as they involve procreation by the Spirit—considers some O.T. stories like that of Hannah, and studies some Philonic passages. All of these he finds to be no true parallels. Next, Mr. Barrett passes in review the theories regarding the Birth Stories propounded by Leisegang, Dr. Thomas Walker, and Norden. Having pronounced all unsatisfactory, he proceeds to consider what the first and third evangelists meant by conception by the Spirit. This is his conclusion:

> The part played by the Holy Spirit in the Birth narratives is thus seen to be the fulfilment of God's promised redemption in a new act of creation comparable with that of Gen. 1. This thought is fundamentally Hebraic; but before it took its present form, it must have come under strong Hellenistic influences (p. 24).

It is the conclusion reached in his final chapter which will provoke most dissent. Why are there so few sayings about the Spirit in the Synoptic Gospels? Dr. E. F. Scott replies (in effect) that Jesus had no liking for the doctrine of the Spirit which removed God to a distance. Dr. Vincent Taylor's answer is that in the circles where the Gospel tradition arose, the Spirit was so common an experience that there was no need to prove it by recording many words of Jesus on the subject. Dr. Newton Flew explains the fewness of the sayings by the fact that Jesus felt that the Old Testament view of the Spirit, which the disciples inherited, required to be baptised into His death. " Calvary was the only gateway to Pentecost." Mr. Barrett rejects all these explanations. Using a radical criticism, Wrede's theory of the Messianic Secret, and a Schweitzerian eschatology, he propounds a new one. Jesus did not speak of Himself as the bearer of the Spirit for the same reason as He veiled His Messiahship. There was no need to predict the gift of the Spirit because the Kingdom had not yet come " with power ". Moreover, Jesus predicted not the Resurrection but the Parousia (though it is extremely doubtful if He ever used the word) and though (as Flew and others have shown) Jesus envisaged a new community, He looked for its realisation only at the Parousia and its consummation in the supernal world.

Few will welcome this view. The weakness of the thesis seems to be three-fold: (*a*) it has to get rid of the Synoptic sayings about

the Spirit; (*b*) it completely ignores the Johannine sayings and does not stop to consider whether they may enshrine a tradition of Jesus' teaching not fully represented in the Synoptics; and (*c*) it adopts the Schweitzerian eschatology more or less wholesale, despite C. H. Dodd and many others.

Yet having uttered this very emphatic dissent from the book's findings, let me in fairness say that here is quite first-rate New Testament scholarship. If we reject Mr. Barrett's conclusions, we have learned much from his book in which are many fine things, true insights and almost an embarrassment of erudition.

A. M. HUNTER

Concerning Worship. By WILLIAM D. MAXWELL, B.D., Ph.D. Geoffrey Cumberledge, Oxford University Press. 8s. 6d.

WHAT should be the content and order of Divine Service? The question affects Churches differently, according as they use or do not use a fixed liturgy. The Anglican, for example, may well feel that for him there is no live option here. If the issue can thus be evaded, a great deal of trouble is at once obviated, and many difficult discussions are rendered unnecessary. It is, however, necessary to ask whether a Church really ought to deprive itself of this concern. Whether liturgy should be allowed to petrify is a profound and important question, and one which might well agitate all Churchmen, even if the more remote question of the nature and extent of permitted change or development be laid on one side. Within Anglicanism a recent answer has of course been offered. But the rejection of the deposited Book of Common Prayer leaves it a little difficult to decide whether it was the character of the changes, or the fact of change, or both, that brought about the failure of the attempt at revision. In any case, the incomparably lovely diction of the Prayer Book ought not to obscure (and of course does not obscure from many faithful Anglicans) the curious and haphazard nature of the logic and order of Morning and Evening Prayer. Nor can the first be regarded as by itself an entirely adequate defence of the second

Churches used to a freer order are here liable to incur both impoverishment and advantage. Standing clear of the rigidity of set forms, they may both sacrifice a priceless heritage and escape the restrictions which the heritage imposes. They are exposed to the need for discussion and controversy concerning the right order and content of divine service; but they can at the same time enjoy the advantages of a living liturgy.

In fact, it may be doubted whether all the Churches which exercise this greater freedom in the ordering of their worship have really utilised the undoubted advantages of their adopted position. Some have succumbed to a distrust of prayer books and a distaste for them which would quite astonish Jenny Geddes, so often invoked as the patron saint of all who " canna abide their wee buiks ". Her historic stool was not thrown because a book was being used. In fact, " Knox's Liturgy " had already that morning been used in St. Giles' without objection. It was because Laud's Liturgy appeared Romish, and because it was imposed without consent of Assembly or Parliament, that objection was taken to it. The freedom which has arisen from the discarding of liturgical formularies has had many advantages. But it has also incurred a serious and little expected nemesis. Just because no book with varied forms (cf. the inclusion of the Litany in the Book of Common Prayer, and the frequent use in the Anglican Church of devotional formularies other than the Prayer Book and without the same official status) is in their hands, those that use no strict liturgy are in practice even more rigidly bound than those who do. And this not only to a single order of Divine Service on all occasions and for all purposes, but to one that tends to meagreness and even baldness in its simplicity. Abandoning books in the name of freedom, they tend to fall victims to a certain tyranny of the one stark accustomed form. When no " orders " are used to enable the people to " follow " Service, it is much more difficult to make use of the great liturgical heritage which is the priceless possession of the Church Catholic. And further, the abandonment of known forms limits the participation of the people in Service to a predominantly passive rôle of listening, in which it is hard to find due place for the appropriate and corresponding physical acts by which it is natural and certainly traditional for God's faithful people, each in his appropriate order, to render their sacrifice of worship.

The present situation of the Churches is therefore a curiously complex one. Those committed to a strict liturgy are apparently not unwilling to consider revision and amendment, but are rather tied by adherence to one whose merits are above praise. Those not so committed possess a formal freedom, but are in practice hindered by certain difficulties from putting this formal freedom to good use by the employment of all that is best in the liturgical tradition.

It is this situation to which this book addresses itself. Those acquainted with the earlier writings of Dr. Maxwell will look for something good here, and their expectations are likely to be entirely satisfied. The author has already in earlier work showed himself intimately acquainted with the whole field in its general and his-

torical aspects. Now all this accumulated equipment is employed to practical ends, and for the solution of problems which the working clergy know from near and recurrent experience. It is safe to say that none of them could fail to profit by careful study of this excellent and timely book.

The primary theme of the book is an examination of form in worship, not for its own sake, but in order that it may be the better vehicle and instrument of the worshipping soul. What is to be the norm which should regulate the selection and sequence of the acts that make up Divine Service? Historically two have been influential in the Scottish Church. One has its source in the Reformed tradition of Calvin and Knox. According to this, Morning Service was constructed on the model of the Eucharist, and even if Holy Communion was not celebrated, worship moved forward through an Approach and the Liturgy of the Word, up to the Liturgy of the Upper Room (the phrases are already used in Dr. Maxwell's *Outline of Christian Worship*), where in effect worship reaches its climax in what came to be called the Great Prayer—really the Eucharistic Prayer of Consecration set in the context of a *missa sicca*. The other norm that has influenced Scottish practice has other roots. It derives from the excessive Puritan emphasis on preaching, which reserved Sermon to the position of last importance, and tended to regard all the rest as " the preliminaries "; and from a certain assimilation to Anglican Morning Prayer constructed of elements from the ancient offices of Mattins, Lauds and Prime, on which a sermon was superimposed as conclusion.

There is room apparently for difference of opinion and preference at this point. The Book of Common Order 1940 for the most part follows the second norm, as does also, e.g., Dr. Ferguson's well-known *Prayers for Common Worship*. On the other side is ranged the Alternative Order for Morning Service in the Book of Common Order, together with Mr. C. F. Miller's recent *Prayers for Parish Worship*. Dr. Maxwell gives excellent grounds for his preference for the form in which the Liturgy of the Word culminates in Sermon, and is succeeded by the Liturgy of the Upper Room, truncated though this last usually is by the omission of the Holy Communion. His argument and conclusions merit, and will certainly have to receive, the most careful attention and study.

Dr. Maxwell represents the tendency, manifested to-day not only in the Reformed Churches, but also in the Roman Church, to " provide the people with a more active and corporate part, in order to ensure that worship may be an action of the whole body of the faithful " (p. 43). His book is, in the second place, a contribution to this end. The restoration of the people to active participation

in worship is the *raison d'être* of set forms of prayer, which " are essential when worshippers take vocal part together in common worship " (p. 54), as it is of course the nerve of the liturgical movement wherever it makes an appearance. The plea for such restoration is further supported by the generous Appendix A, in which " Various Forms of Prayer " are dealt with, and attention is very properly drawn to the scope offered especially by Litanies for active participation in worship on the part of the people. It is good too to see the recommendation made so firmly that the Psalter be restored to the more extended and flexible use to which it has traditionally been put, instead of being employed for didactic and sermonic ends only.

The third element in the book is not the least valuable, though it happens to be the most difficult to review. It is a very pertinent examination of the nature and conduct of worship and its accessories—a discussion far too rich in suggestion and recommendation to allow of detailed reference. Inevitably some judgments will provoke question or even dissent. One might ask, e.g., whether there is not more to be said for the presence of the Bible on the Holy Table to represent the Word Sacramental than is allowed on p. 103 note 1; whether the rule on p. 112 note 1, that the opening phrase of a repeated prayer be not said by the people, applies to the Lord's Prayer when, as is usual in Scottish worship, a protocol or formula of introduction is used; whether the robe makers are at fault in constructing certain academic hoods with the evident intention that they be secured below the bands by a hook or button (cf. p. 152); whether the Lord's Prayer does not lose something in being on any occasion at all allowed to relapse into a silence from which the Reformation partly rescued it, and to which certain Puritan influences still condemn it. But such remarks are made less in criticism, than to indicate the extent and incisiveness of the discussion.

The wise and discriminating judgment of the author is seen at its very best in such a chapter as that devoted to " The Conduct of Worship ", where on page after page good advice and suggestion is offered. His " feeling " for what is fit and proper in worship is apparent in excellent chapters on Worship as Offering, Adoration, and Heritage; and a wealth of intimate and detailed knowledge is displayed in a chapter which deals with " The Church Building ". Altogether this is a book to be seriously studied by those in all communions, clergy or laymen, to whom the Service of the House of God is precious.

HOLBROOK LIBRARY
PACIFIC SCHOOL
OF RELIGION

J. K. S. Reid

Service Book for the Young. Prepared by the Committee on Public Worship and Aids to Devotion of the Church of Scotland. Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 4s. 6d.

In His Presence. By Denis E. Taylor. Religious Education Press Ltd. 2s.

L'Office Divin. Cahiers d'Église et Liturgie. Editions Labor, Genève, et Editions Je Sers, Paris.

The Church Committee responsible for this *Service Book for the Young* is to be warmly congratulated on what to the present writer seems a first-rate piece of work. There can be no doubt that the compilers of this little book have had their ears close to the ground, and have appreciated a number of the important facts in the Sunday School situation. They have realised that worship is an important, if not *the* important, part of the training of a child in religious matters; that children love to take a genuine part in the offering of worship, do it admirably, and profit from it enormously; that experiments in extending the element of worship have been made in many Schools with mixed success; and that these experiments are worthy of encouragement and also of guidance.

Both these are offered in the book under review. What does this little volume try to do? The answer is that the attempt is made to let the children participate actively in the worship of the school or class. Worship is then no longer something that is merely offered on the child's behalf, but rather something which he himself has a hand in presenting. Among the old devices employed are the restoration of the interaction of leader and congregation in versicle and response, and the affirmation in one form or another of faith or belief. Among the new, or at least less frequently employed, devices is the repetition of prayers clause by clause after the leader.

With what success is all this done? One feels the answer must be: with quite conspicuous success. A language is used which is for the most part simple and dignified, avoiding the banality of some prayers compiled for children, and often, if not quite always, achieving the lapidary quality demanded by anything liturgical.

Here is a treasure house of ideas for those who have to lead children in public worship. An exuberant, almost a bewildering, variety of forms is offered—an *embarras des richesses* which calls for the exercise of some restraint on the part of the leader, who may well yield to the temptation to experiment with more boldness than discretion, more zeal than patience, unless care is taken. Perhaps one rightly suspects that this exuberance reflects, not so much assur-

ance on the part of the compilers, as indecision concerning which versicles and responses should be made standard.

No criticism can obscure the very high quality of this achievement; yet it is not altogether above criticism. When the writer put the book before by no means one of the least intelligent of Sunday School teachers, it elicited the comment that it was impossible to tell whether the book was meant to be in the hands of the children or not. It is strange and also unfortunate that this question should not, in the early pages of the " Notes and Suggestions ", have been unmistakably settled. That the intention is to let the children have the book is indicated (though hardly proved) by the complexity of some of the responses (e.g., the Act of Loyalty on p. 136), by the versicles and responses for Easter (p. 43 f., whose once-a-year use hardly justifies their commission to memory), and the otherwise admirable responses on p. 80 f. with the subtle variation at the third repetition. On the other hand, that the book is *not* intended to reach the hands of the child seems indicated by the price, small though it is for a mere single copy; and also by the fact that a large number of prayers " clause by clause " are introduced, and it is difficult to understand the need for being " taught by the priest " (as the Romans and the Anglicans have it) if, with the book before them, the pupils could quite as easily read it off. If not intended for the children themselves, it might be expected that some guidance would have been given about the use of blackboard or cyclostyled sheets for making the children familiar with the responses and so on.

Some lesser points call for remark. Sometimes the rubric " clause by clause " is omitted; but the presumption is that wherever upright strokes appear in a prayer the intention is that it should be repeated after the leader. And is the use of the initial word " Leader " at the prayer on p. 25 an unintentional error, in place of the otherwise usual " All "?

How admirable it is that our children should be trained to know and use half a dozen or so of the familiar and catholic versicles and responses! One is, however, not quite sure about one or two of these that are proposed—whether " And let Thy will be done " in response to the " Lord hear our prayer " (p. 108) would not lead to confusion with the other much more familiar response to the same versicle. Nor can one be quite happy at the application of the principle of versicle and response to the " Act of Loyalty " on p. 136, though its use for "God be in my head" (p. 105) is excellent.

It is probably a pity that the exquisite collect of the Communion Service (" Almighty God unto whom all hearts be open ") is split

up for " clause by clause " repetition. The use of the word " uniform " instead of the more familiar " ungraded " causes a moment's uncertainty. It is noteworthy that the Primary children are (with disputable wisdom) encouraged to pray in the second person plural, and no help is offered in making the apparently difficult and even critical transition from this to the later and more usual Thou.

But these are minor blemishes in a book which, it is not too much to say, may well rank as a classic, at least among those Churches which are neither wholly accustomed nor quite averse to the use of liturgy and liturgical forms.

In His Presence describes itself as a " prayer book and guide to Confirmation, Communion and Church Teaching ", in the main follows familiar lines, and ought to be of detailed help to catechumens. For example, the excellent " Prayer Note Book " provides suggestions for prayer, and blank pages opposite afford opportunity for writing down specific needs and names, " any member of your local town council ", " more manpower (write the names of any *you* think might make good Priests) ", and so on. Not much is left to chance: the candidate is advised to use pencil and write lightly, so as to be able to rub out and re-use the pages; and exhorted to take the greatest pains over neatness, since failure here induces distaste for the book.

The emphasis on Holy Scripture is noteworthy and commendable: " the most valuable thing this world affords " is quoted from the Coronation Service; and the reading of the " Christian's *daily* good news " is held to be " far more important than reading the daily papers ". The section devoted to Holy Communion includes a form of Service in Church in Preparation for Holy Communion, with an examen which is a contribution of value, to be laid alongside of Wotherspoon's *Kyrie Eleison* and other classic preparations.

The honesty of the writer is apparent throughout. He seems to retain an evangelical view of the Holy Communion; but in other more peripheral matters, he is plainly attracted to the richer heritage of another trend within the Anglican Church. No one will hold this against him. He evidently thinks that people ought to hold certain beliefs and observe certain practices, to which, however, only a part of even Anglicanism adheres. But it is a very serious question whether he does well to represent these beliefs and practices as apparently the *only* options open to the catechumen. Not a hint is given that abstinence from meat on Fridays, fasting, making Communion fasting, vestments (introduced by the curious name of " church clothes ") and episcopalian government, are all matters on which views and practice vary within the Christian Church, and even within the Anglican Church.

Further, it is surely remarkable in a book, whose author is (or rather was) Secretary of the Youth Department of the British Council of Churches and subscribes himself so, that (so far as the present writer could discover) there is only a single reference to the " world-wide Church ", none to Churches other than the Anglican, and no mention of the name of the Church of England. What the cause of these singular omissions may be, it is impossible to say. But the impression they are likely to leave on a catechumen is that *the Church* is simply the Church here spoken of, very much the Anglican Church. It is nowhere hinted that in fact quite a lot of Christians do not belong to this Church at all.

Theologically, it is a pity to find so subjective a note struck as appears in answer to the question: " How are we forgiven?" The query raises such tremendous expectations, but how meagre are the terms in which it is answered: " It is a matter of our will power and asking God's help." Has not the Cross of Christ really more to do in the matter than even our being " truly sorry about our sins "? Nor can it be said without reservation, that the first thing to remember about Confirmation is that it is " entirely scriptural ". The Apostles might well find it hard to see strong resemblance between what is now meant by Confirmation and the occasions recounted in Acts 8, hesitate to use the word " entirely ", and in their hesitation would (curiously enough) be joined by such modern scholars as Fr. L. S. Thornton and Dom Gregory Dix, with whom, one imagines, the writer of this book would at other points have much in common.

Like the others in the same series of *cahiers*, *L'Office Divin* is further evidence of the quickened interest in liturgy, noticeable not least in the Churches which have for long enough dispensed with strict formularies. It provides morning, midday and evening Service for each day in the week. In a justly phrased Foreword, it is pointed out that when even the Christian raises his soul to God, it is often in " a mighty confusion of sentiments and notions "; and " directed prayer ", so far from prejudicing the freedom of the Spirit, liberates the spirit from the bondage of its own poverty, and ushers it into the richer life of the " collective personality of the Christian community ". It is maintained that the judicious use of formularies makes possible " a collective act on the part of the congregation, which says the Psalms together, sings the hymns, recites the prayers, and associates itself with the officiant by appropriate responses to the readings of Holy Scripture and to the different acts in the devotions ". The book is the result of the experience in study and practice of a group of Vaudois pastors over a period of ten years.

In quality it is an admirable little production. It is wholly right

to restore the Psalms to the devotional use to which they have traditionally been put: *les psaumes sont des prières.* Much use is made of versicles and responses, both in the prefaces to the Offices (for the most part in the words of Holy Scripture), and also in the prayers where effective use is made of very brief responses, *Seigneur, exaucenous!* and *Seigneur, aie pitié!* (pp. 20 f. and 47 f.). The phrasing of the prayers reaches a high standard, those e.g. on p. 69, *O Christ-Dieu, Créateur,* and on p. 73, *Seigneur, Dieu des esprits et de toute chair,* are beautiful.

What seems an excellent Lectionary of Old Testament, Gospel and Epistle Lessons for each day is provided, with Psalms appropriately abbreviated and divided. Prayers proper to the chief seasons of the Christian Year are supplied, some of which are borrowed from the Roman and Anglican and no doubt other formularies; and the welcome promise is made of a more complete provision later. Pasteur R. Paquier, of Saint-Saphorin, Lavaux, who signs the Foreword, merits congratulation for this excellent little work.

J. K. S. Reid

The Minister's Manual. Published by the Church of Scotland Committee on Publications. 7s. 6d.

The writer used to be warned, whimsically but wisely, not to make his letters "Auctioneers' Catalogues". The volume under review, dealing as it does with the vast area of a Minister's life and work and seeking to lay before him a wide variety of opinions expressed and methods used by others, is in like danger. Nevertheless it achieves to an extent truly remarkable clarity, unity, and practical helpfulness.

The Student, the Probationer, the young Ordinand, the Minister of many years' experience will all find here not only a mass of relevant information but a vision, wide and clear, of what he and the people of his care ought, by God's grace, to be thinking and doing.

"By God's grace"—for everything here is seen *sub specie aeternitatis.* To quote from the chapter on "The Theology of Worship", words that are themselves a quotation: "Never in human story has there been less awe before the holy thing, never has the sentiment of reverence been weaker, or the sense of consecrated commitment to a supreme object of devotion had less place in men's thoughts." Such is the world in which the Minister is called to witness of God—Lord of the Universe as well as Heavenly Father—the God whose Church it is that we serve, the God who has a purpose for every man. Such is the task to which he must give himself in this spirit of "consecrated commitment".

It follows therefore that his devotional life is of crucial importance. Private Prayer must never be " crowded out " but time for it " fenced round " diligently.

" To plunge into the maelstrom of the day trusting to chance impulses in ourselves and favouring conditions outside of us is to presume we can do God's work without God and there is no greater presumption than that." Those challenging words—and there are many others of like calibre—will cause us both to seek to appropriate the rich treasures worshipping men and women have handed down to us and personally to wait upon the Lord who comes to each of us " down His own secret stair ".

But the study shelves must contain more than books of Devotion or of Theology. While the Minister as an expounder of the Word must study not only books about the Bible but, above all, the Scriptures themselves, many are the forms of Literature which will not only stimulate his mind but interpret the manifold works of God and the varied needs of men. Nor does this very practical Manual forget to counsel the care of the body realising how many " break down " under the stress and strain of these days. We are reminded of the wise words:

> The body at its best,
> How far can that project thy soul on its lone way?

while we are drawn up sharply and caused furiously to think by such a sentence as this:

> The man who has not discovered that there is within him but a thin film between the emotional and the sensual may one day be stabbed broad awake to the need of eternal vigilance in that moral warfare to which all of us, as ministers and as men, are for ever conscript.

With his powers—physical, mental and spiritual—becoming ever more consecrated, the Minister enters the Sanctuary Sunday by Sunday. The responsibility of leading the prayers of each assembled worshipper is rightly emphasised, as is the need for the Minister to prepare most carefully for the " Devotions " and to instruct his people in the significance of the various acts of each Service of Corporate Worship—as well as in the meaning of the Sacraments. With regard to Preaching, there is much material here for discussion in " Fraternals " and other groups. I give a few quotations to whet appetite for the many others which will be found worth noting and worth applying. How practical, in the first place, is the following: " A minister will soon find that impressions are fleeting and ideas evaporate. Even jottings in course of time become cryptic conundrums! Nor should a man hoard his material too much for special

occasions later on. Let him use his best right away. He is a shepherd and his flock is always hungry."

The constant vital connexion between Pulpit and Pastorate is strikingly illustrated thus: " A certain minister, at an early stage of his sermon preparation, went into his Church and sat in several pews in succession trying to think himself imaginatively into the experiences of the families who normally occupied them."

Challengingly we are reminded that there is far more in preaching than human wisdom and sympathy. " Power in preaching comes from a personal relationship to God. . . . Preaching is God's own answer to the questions men are asking. It is God's raising of questionings in their minds that He may draw them to Himself."

We now step with the Minister from Church to Hall. The Manual reflects the number and variety of Organisations possible within the Congregation for the serving of Parishioners young and old. There are several issues worthy of debate here. How can these bodies be an integral part of the Church's life rather than " ends " in themselves? How can the spiritual life of their members be cultivated—while mind and body are being exercised in many healthy and happy ways? Is the Church to provide cheap Badminton, for example, to those who do not enter its buildings for any other purpose? How can the Church most helpfully foster real fellowship among its members? Every Minister has to answer the very practical question of his own attitude to his Organisations and the share he takes in them. Two counsels are well worth pondering. " In all his intercourse with the office-bearers of organisations, he must remember that they are fellow-workers, with personalities, ideas and wills of their own, and treat them as such with considerate respect. If his organisations are to run smoothly and efficiently, he must be at pains to cultivate the spirit of self-restraint and patience, understanding of other men and women and the tactfulness of Christian love."

The other concerns the allocation of the Pastor's time. While recognising the special aptitude of certain Ministers for particular work, say in youth clubs, the Manual asserts: " He has also to recognise the fact that if he is to make contact with the menfolk of his congregation and the young people of both sexes in their homes, much of his visiting must be done in the evening."

In regard to the Pastoral Office, much inspiring guidance is given in this book. The Ministry is a " cure of souls " and it is for us to establish and maintain personal contact not only with the aged and infirm but with the young and strong. Be systematic in your visiting whether you intimate the streets for each week from the Pulpit or not. The fact of being systematic does not necessitate your

being mechanical if you go not in the spirit of kindliness only but in that of prayerfulness. (You go in a prayerful spirit but that does not mean you will feel called upon to offer prayer in each home although we should be alert—and not only in time of sickness—to see and use some special opportunity.)

It takes an inevitably long time to " get round " our large congregations; but it is vital, not only that we should comply with requests for a special visit, but that all should feel that the Minister is interested in each and available for consultation at any time.

One of our writers advocates the emphasising of this in each Communicants' Class and the reviewer himself is in the habit of so doing in the personal interview held with each after the Class meetings have been held.

A very pertinent pastoral question is how in large Churches the Minister can fulfil his responsibility to Parish as well as to Congregation. Part of the answer must be along the line of mobilising each member as a " witness " and a " missionary ".

In the solemn Ordination or Induction Service the Minister is asked: " Do you promise to be subject in the Lord to this Presbytery and to the superior Courts of the Church and to take your due part in the administration of its affairs?" " Due part " is the crucial phrase to be interpreted by each according to circumstance—and conscience. The Minister must seek to be a loyal and helpful Presbyter and much useful information about Church Courts is here—at the same time he must pray to be saved from having to make the confession of the old text, " they have made me the keeper of the Vineyards but mine own vineyard have I not kept ". The same principle holds good in regard to Public work in the Community. But whatever Committees in Presbytery, Synod or Assembly he may or may not be on, it is for the Minister ever to foster in his people the consciousness of belonging not just to " oor Kirk " but to the great family of the Church of Scotland. He must tell them (not always leaving it to a " special " deputy!) about how the Church seeks to do the work of Christ through Home Mission, Church Extension, Youth Work and Social Service—through its Foreign, its Jewish, its Colonial and Continental work and so on. Entering into this wider world by thought and prayer, by gift and some form of personal service, the men and women of the pew will come to realise their place in the Holy Catholic (and that word still cries out for explanation!) or Universal Church.

This review has not done much more than " skim the surface " of a worthy volume whose every chapter can yield not only information but inspiration. It is hoped that every reader will go deeper for

himself but enough has been said, I trust, to show what a debt we owe to the Commission for the Interpretation of God's Will in the present Crisis for originating the idea of such a Manual and in particular to the Editor, Rev. W. S. Buchan, B.D., of Dunbog, and to all associated with him as contributors or as members of the "Advisory Panels".

One may have small criticisms such as deeming the division into "Theoretical", "Practical" and "Personal" as artificial and misleading. But the dominant reaction is that of gratitude that we have a volume which will make us realise more adequately the richness of our inheritance in the Church of Scotland, and which, by the Divine Blessing, will make us more fit to take up again the tasks of the Holy Ministry "than which there is no more heart-breaking, soul-satisfying task in the world."

G. Rendle Leathem

The Student World, ed. Robert C. Mackie, vol. XLI (1948), four parts, pp. 384. The World's Student Christian Federation, Geneva. Annual subscription, 10s.

These four numbers of the quarterly magazine of the W.S.C.F. are heartening as well as full of interest. No one knows better than the students' chaplain how easily religious life in the university or college can become parochial or pietistic, but here is evidence in abundance that the Student Movements are doing all they can to encourage their members to relate prayer, worship, and Bible study to the realities—sometimes the grim realities—of the situation in which their studies must be pursued. One number, for instance, brings together reports of Christian student life in the countries of the far East. They tell of the dislocation of the work of universities and colleges by invasion and civil war, and of the sufferings of the Church; but they tell of more significant things also—of the determined resistance of Christian students (almost always a small minority) to the encroachments of fascism and communism, of perseverance in the face of many difficulties and great discouragement, and of growing cohesion and influence in affairs. Each contributor breathes the same optimism of faith: we have been through hard times; for some they are not yet past; but everywhere there is a new awakening, and a new sense of opportunity and urgency.

The second number, which deals with Christian obedience and

the great Westminster Conference, and the third, in which the question of the Christian's attitude to power-politics is discussed show that among Christian students there is a lively awareness that the relation of Christianity to the State and the attitude of the Christian to " the powers that be " need to be carefully thought out afresh in terms of the contemporary situation. Against entire and willing submission to state or party on the one hand, and acquiescence, on the other, " in an uneasy discipline, accepting inevitable restrictions, without much confidence in the results " (p. 83) there must be set the redeemed, Biblical conception of obedience which is rooted in God's confrontation of man: " Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I shall speak unto thee." But the matter does not rest at the personal encounter and the personal conviction; because the Christian student is primarily concerned with the Gospel, he must also be concerned with politics. The encounter with God issues in the " sending "—and the Christian is " sent ", among others, into the realm of politics. He must therefore know basic political facts, he must be helped to think as a Christian in the sphere of politics as he does in that of personal living, and he must share his political and theological insights with others, and learn in his turn from theirs—and it is to these ends that political discussion within the W.S.C.F. is encouraged. In the third number of this volume of *The Student World* there are several interesting discussions of the subject of power—among them, an enquiry whether the " powers that be " are ministers of God or of Satan in our time. It is emphasised more than once that in any consideration of " power " the Christian must never forget that the " powers that be " are not the only powers, and that " this is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith ".

The fourth number is devoted entirely to a discussion of the missionary situation. Here, as in the other numbers, the dominant thought is of the growing opportunities before Christians—due in this case partly to the ecumenical movement, and partly to an awakening to a sense of missionary responsibility on the part of students. Again, there is no attempt to minimise the fact that Christianity is a minority movement, and that there are many adversaries, but all through there sounds the confident note of faith.

One cannot lay down this forty-first volume of *The Student World* without a feeling of gratitude for the work which the Student Movements are doing all over the world. It is significant that each number had its origin in a conference—Oslo, Westminster, Lundsberg, Woudschoten. A German tells what the first meant to him (pp.

70 ff.), and there can be no doubt that, valuable though direction of thought and inspiration of study groups can be, it is in these and similar meetings between Christian students and others of every denomination and race, where common problems are faced and discussed on the basis of a common faith, that there lies a great hope for the future.

SHERWIN BAILEY

OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY AND THE HISTORY OF HEBREW RELIGION[1]

by The Rev. Professor C. R. NORTH

The theological climate to-day is markedly more genial than it was thirty-two years ago, when this our Society was founded. Then we were living in a theological ice-age. Theology had largely lost its appeal, alike for preachers and for scholars. The demand was for histories of religion, not for theology. The Bible commentator was considered to have done his duty if he explained what the sacred writer meant when he wrote what he did. In the Preface to his Commentary—dated May 1919—Peake wrote:

> It (the present work) is not intended to be homiletical or devotional, but to convey with precision . . . the meaning of the original writers, and reconstruct the conditions in which they worked and of which they wrote. It will thus, while not explicitly devotional or practical, provide that accurate interpretation of the text through which alone the sound basis for devotional use and practical application can be laid.

In the very exhaustive Index to the Commentary there are only nine references under the heading " Theology ", and most of those amount to little more than that the word theology happens to occur in the text of the book.

In our own field, to be sure, Davidson's *The Theology of the Old Testament* had been published in 1904, but although it went through several impressions there was a wide-spread feeling that it was a book born out of due time. It was published posthumously, and the materials in it were gathered from Davidson's undated lecture notes over a period of many years, sometimes revised in as many as four, five, or even six editions. A higher critic might have gone to work on it to attempt to decide the relative dates of the various contents.

But suppose that Davidson had edited the work himself, would its method and arrangement have been different from that of the book as we have it? It is not obvious that it would. Dr. Salmond, who edited it, wrote in his Preface:

[1] A Presidential Address given to the Society for Old Testament Study on Tuesday, 4th January 1949.

> One thing that gave Dr. Davidson much concern was the question of the plan on which a work of this kind should be constructed. His object was to bring the history and the ideas into living relation, to trace the progress of Old Testament faith from stage to stage, and to exhibit the course along which it advanced from its beginnings to the comparative fulness which it obtained at the end of the prophetic period.

In other words, Davidson deliberated long as to whether he should write an Old Testament Theology in the form of a History of Hebrew Religion. " But ", says Salmond, " he never carried out the scheme." Why did he not, and why would he have not, even if he had lived longer? Because, his editor tells us:

> He had an increasing distrust of ambitious attempts to fix the date of every separate piece of the Hebrew literature, and link the ideas in their several measures of immaturity and maturity with the writings as thus arranged. He became more and more convinced that there was no solid basis for such confident chronological dispositions of the writings and juxtapositions of the beliefs. In his judgment the only result of endeavours of this kind was to give an entirely fictitious view of the ideas, in their relative degrees of definiteness, the times at which they emerged or came to certainty, and the causes that worked to their origin and development. The most that we had scientific warrant to do, in view of the materials available for the purpose, was, in his opinion, to take the history in large tracts and the literature in a few broad divisions, and study the beliefs and the deliverances in connexion with these.

Many of Davidson's contemporaries thought him overcautious. But was there, perhaps, something prophetic about his attitude to the problem? What he felt was very much what Pedersen and others are now saying. In fact, was it Davidson, or was it those of us who joined this Society in its first decade, who were going within the space of a generation to be out of date?

And now, within the recent memory of all of us here, we have lost, much earlier than for his own and for his work's sake we could have wished, another great Old Testament theologian. Wheeler Robinson had intended to devote his years of retirement to the writing of a Theology of the Old Testament. All that we shall ever have of it is Prolegomena, his *Inspiration and Revelation in the Old Testament.* This, like Davidson's *Theology*, was published posthumously. In the last paragraph but one of it Wheeler Robinson wrote: " As for the content of the revelation (in distinction from its form), it is inevitable that we

should state this in a series of propositions to constitute a ' Theology of the Old Testament ', *even if they are arranged in historical order* (italics mine), and called a ' History of the Religion of Israel '." What " a series of propositions . . . arranged in historical order " may be, I am not very clear. " Arranged in historical order and called a History of the Religion of Israel " does seem to imply that in Wheeler Robinson's judgment a History of the Religion of Israel could be written to which the title *A Theology of the Old Testament* might not improperly be given. However that may be, it seems that his final choice would have been the traditional method of arranging the materials topically, not chronologically, for he goes on to say: " If they are stated topically, and not chronologically, as a ' theology ' requires . . . "; though note that he adds that, if they are so stated, " they become still more abstract and remote from the once-living, vibrating, and dynamic religion of Israel."

Neither of the two great British Old Testament theologians of the past century, then, completed, or could have completed, his task precisely as he would have wished. Both were in much the same dilemma. For Wheeler Robinson the topical arrangement seemed dictated by the necessities of the subject. He would therefore have felt obliged to treat the subject topically, not chronologically, as indeed he did in his *Religious Ideas of the Old Testament*, though his last word seems a frank admission that this method was a kind of *pis aller*. Davidson, on the other hand, wrote a Theology because he felt that, all things considered, it was the only thing he could do. To essay a History of Hebrew Religion was, for him, an impossible task.

The reason why it is so difficult to write a satisfactory Theology of the Old Testament is of course that Old Testament theology is so intimately bound up with history. It is complicated by history in two ways. First, the religion had a long history, so that to try to systematise it in a theology is like trying to count a flock of sheep that will never keep still. This remains true even when we have abandoned all attempts to force the history of Old Testament religion on to a procrustean bed of nineteenth century evolutionary theory. You can write a theology of Deutero-Isaiah, or of the Pauline Epistles, or of the Johannine writings. It is a different matter to write a theology of a religion which was in process of movement and growth

over a period of more than a millennium. Hence it is usual for modern theologies of the Old Testament to combine the historical and systematic methods of treatment. Secondly, revelation in the Old Testament was mediated through history, so that it cannot be disengaged from history without reducing it to something like a valley of dry bones. As Principal Elmslie has put it recently: " That is the anatomical method of dealing with the religion of Israel, and its result is that one looks at a corpse or a skeleton instead of a living man: the marvel of vitality has gone a-missing " (*How Came our Faith*, p. 10).

The issue as between Old Testament Theology and the History of Hebrew Religion is not, therefore, entirely one of principle. It is largely one of convenience, a question of form and method. I do not know into what form Professor Porteous may be intending to cast the Old Testament Theology which we all hope he may one day give to the world, but I do not gather that he feels himself bound to make it topical and systematic. Nor, I gather, do those who are clamouring for us *Alttestamentler* to give them Theology, demand that such theology should follow the traditional pattern. What they are asking is not quite met even by Eichrodt. Whether it be Theology of the Old Testament, or History of Hebrew Religion, what we are being asked for is something rather different. Elmslie's recent book is, as he frankly says, " A Study of Hebrew Religion ". But he says that if he had called it that, he " might have risked losing the battle without even the chance of firing a shot!" Theology of the Old Testament or History of Hebrew Religion—either may serve if what you want is a *pou sto* from which to study the New Testament. But if what you want is something that shall be relevant to the needs of to-day, both are under the suspicion of dealing with what is past and done with, the more so because—for the Christian at any rate—the Old Testament is an incomplete revelation. Hence both, the Theology of the Old Testament and the History of Hebrew Religion, are of mainly academic interest, and people to-day are asking for something of more immediate and practical value. We here may be tempted to say, " Very well! But this is a learned society "; though since most of us are in orders of one kind or another, I do not imagine that we can be content to take up that attitude, whether as individuals or even as a society.

What, then, is it that we are being asked for? On this question Professor Cunliffe-Jones is quite explicit: he wants " a properly theological doctrine of the Bible ", which, he says, is something which the achievements of modern biblical scholarship—valuable and necessary though they are in themselves—do not themselves supply (*The Authority of the Biblical Revelation*, p. 9). " A theological doctrine of the *Bible* " is of course something in which New Testament scholars are equally concerned with us, if indeed either party is directly concerned. The view may be taken that it is the responsibility of the systematic rather than of the biblical theologian as such, that our responsibility is discharged when we have provided the data on which such a theological doctrine of the Bible is to be based. On the other hand, Cunliffe-Jones appears to assume that it is the business of biblical scholars, and particularly of Old Testament scholars, since the Old Testament presents difficulties from which the New Testament is almost entirely free; and I should agree with him that we ought at least to have a hand in it, otherwise if it is left to those who have no specialist knowledge of the Bible it may easily start from wrong premises. Suppose, then, that we are willing, what does " a theological doctrine of the Bible " involve? According to Cunliffe-Jones it involves the mutual interpenetration of historical criticism and theological affirmation. In particular, he would ask three questions in regard to any particular passage: " First, what is the original meaning of its author and what is its relation to his own times? Second, what is the meaning of the passage in relation to the whole historical movement covered by the Old and New Testaments? Third, what is the meaning of the passage as part of the witness to the absolute Revelation of God in Jesus Christ our Lord?" (op. cit., p. 11). The meaning of his first question is perfectly clear: it is what we have long been doing, and his plea is that it is not enough. What may be the precise relation between his second and third questions, I am not quite clear, but he ventures two examples of what he means by his third. The first of them concerns what Hosea had to say about the love of God. On that, Cunliffe-Jones says: " But we live in the light of the Cross of Christ, and it is unthinkable that we shall read the message of Hosea without it speaking to us Christians of the meaning of the Cross of Christ in which the meaning of the

love of God has been fully acted out. The message of Hosea, taken seriously in its historical context, has gained a new dimension of depth because of the Cross of Christ." I imagine that all Christians will agree with that. (I hope my Jewish colleagues will pardon me if I speak as a Christian; they do the same kind of thing when they almost unconsciously read an earlier passage in the light of a later, or any passage in the light of their full theological affirmations. We all do it, and can hardly help doing it.) It is a valid principle that a Scripture writer—or, for that matter, any writer of genius—sometimes writes more truly that he fully realises. What the Second Isaiah says about the Servant of Yahweh is a case in point. Moreover if, as we often say, Scripture is a unity, something more than a collection of separate pieces, there will, on the lines of Cunliffe-Jones's second question, be some relation between the separate parts and the whole.

What gives me pause, however, is Cunliffe-Jones's second example of his third proposition. It concerns the slaughter of the Amalekites in 1 Samuel 15. " What are we to make of the story?" he asks. And his answer is:

> We ought to consider here how much the enmity against Amalek symbolises in the history of Israel the warfare against evil; we ought also to note that the rigour which is so offensive is the pious reverence of those who feared God but not the actual historical practice of Israel; we ought to hear in the word of Samuel for all its crudity the absolute claim of God upon our allegiance and link it with the absolute claims which our Lord made in His own ministry; we ought to learn also the danger of confounding the absolute Word of God with relative and wrong claims due to the ignorance and stubbornness of our own hearts. Indeed, read in the light of a full knowledge of the historical and theological context of the Bible the story is rich in its message of the contradiction at the heart of man and of God's patience and mercy.

Well, that may or may not be good homiletics, but I doubt very much whether it is theology. It is the sort of thing we can find by going direct to the New Testament without making a devious journey *via* the Old Testament to the New, and then back in retrospect to the Old. No doubt there is much in the Old Testament which lends itself readily to Christian interpretation. Examples come readily to mind. The story of Jacob's wrestling may originally have been a story about a river-demon who would have no one cross his ford if he could possibly pre-

vent it. Charles Wesley read it and it inspired in him the greatest of all his hymns: " Come, O Thou Traveller unknown." A Christian preacher may start from it and tell his congregation that the Divine Wrestler who at long last brings man to the encounter is Christ, that the hand that wounds is a hand that is pierced. That is good homiletics; it is also sound theology, though it is a different thing from saying that the mysterious stranger with whom Jacob wrestled was actually Christ, as Wilhelm Vischer appears to do.

Take another example, the story in Exod. 33.19-23 of how Moses asked to see the divine glory. The answer he received was: " Thou canst not see my face: for man shall not see me and live. And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon the rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand until I have passed by: and I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back but my face shall not be seen." That passage, together with Isa. 26.4—" the Lord Yahweh is an everlasting rock ", Heb. " rock of ages "—inspired Toplady's " Rock of Ages, cleft for me ", and Wesley's " Thou Shepherd of Israel, and mine ", with its concluding lines:

> Concealed in the cleft of Thy side,
> Eternally held in Thy heart.

Such an allegorical interpretation, if we must call it so, is frequent in the Fathers from the time of Irenaeus, and McNeile in the Westminster Commentary on Exodus *in loc.* has this quotation from Canon Mason on a passage in Gregory of Nazianzus:

> The Incarnation gives an assured point from which we may observe and study God without being overwhelmed by the greatness of the revelation. The glories of the Divine Nature are tempered for us, as it were, by the Human Life which encompasses us as we look out from it to the Divine. By the Incarnation our field of contemplation is at once restricted and made clear.

That is superb homiletics, and at the same time legitimate theology. No one, too, I imagine, has the hardihood to wish that the allegorical interpretation of the Song of Songs had never been introduced, if only for the use to which it was put by some of the great hymn writers. But that kind of thing went

as far as it usefully could, and there seems little purpose in reviving it to-day. And if Cunliffe-Jones means that any and every passage in the Old Testament is capable of a Christian theological interpretation, we are in serious danger of reopening the flood-gates to all sorts of allegorical and symbolical interpretation against which modern historical interpretation was a much-needed protest. Nor were modern critics the first to protest against it. St. Chrysostom did, and St. Thomas Aquinas, as Elmslie reminds us (op. cit., p. 70), "insisted that only the literal sense of Scripture should be cited as supporting doctrines."

One of Cunliffe-Jones's pleas is that we should

> take seriously the necessary interaction between two groups of ways of using the Bible. There is, firstly, the distinction between the academic and the churchly ways of using the Bible, and it is necessary that there should be constant interaction between them. There is, secondly, the distinction between the historical and the theological ways of using the Bible, and it is also necessary that there should be constant interaction between them. This second distinction is by no means identical with the first; on the contrary, the interaction between the historical and the theological should take place on the academic and also on the churchly plane.

This sounds rather complicated, and I am not very happy about the distinction between academic and churchly, though it may be that some such distinction is inevitable in practice. But suppose we grant that there should be interaction between the historical and theological ways of using the Bible, a society like this is concerned with that interaction on the academic rather than on the churchly plane. Of course, most of us are preachers as well as scholars—poor preachers, it may be, because we are scholars!—but it seems to me that much may be permissible on the churchly plane which is not permissible on the academic. If, for example, Anglicans choose to transfigure the imprecatory Psalms in the light of the New Testament, and it does them good, who is to say them nay? But it is not exactly theology. At least, it is not the kind of thing we should feel happy about introducing into an Old Testament Theology. There is much in the Old Testament that has nothing to do with theology, unless we are going to insist on interpreting it in ways that do violence to the canons of sound exegesis.

Another approach to Old Testament Theology is that of Principal Elmslie, who insists that the Old Testament is des-

perately relevant to the present world-situation. His claim is that " in the course of Hebrew history beliefs were attained—attained in an extraordinary way—that are in essence eternally valid, that speak to the heart of our manifold anxieties and fundamentally concern right understanding of the Christian faith and its presentation in the modern world." Hence the underlying argument of his book is " that its subject is profoundly relevant to present issues, social and personal."

But have " present issues, social and personal " anything to do with theology? Most assuredly they have, with theology as the prophets would have understood it, far more than much pulpit moralising has to do with theology. If we are going to look to the Old Testament for light on the present day, we shall certainly find ourselves involved in problems of national life and international relations. God, as the Hebrews understood Him, was active in history. Presumably, nay certainly, He still is. We cannot take the view that Yahweh was active in the affairs of Israel and Assyria, but that God to-day is remote from such issues as those between Communist and non-Communist. It is sometimes said that history was Yahweh's medium of revelation in the early days of the nation Israel, but that later with the emphasis on individual piety history ceased to be His medium and He now spoke instead to the individual. That is surely a wrong way of putting it. It was the individual prophet who was able to discern the true meaning of history because of what Yahweh had revealed to *him*. No nation is capable of discerning what God is doing in the world except, as Amos put it, He reveals His secret unto His servants the prophets (Amos 3.7).

There is in all literature no more astonishing commentary on the two world-wars in our time than what Isaiah had to say in Yahweh's name about Israel and Assyria:

> Ho Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation! I will send him against a profane nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations not a few. . . . Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. . . . Shall the axe boast itself against

him that heweth therewith? Shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? (Isa. 10.5-7, 12, 15).

The parallel is so obvious that there is no need to labour it. During the dark days of 1940-2 we said—people who made no pretence to being theologians, or even religious, said—that we had done much to deserve the plight we were in, and we made up our minds to right some of the wrongs we had tolerated between the wars. And now that Hitler is gone, Assyria is Russia—at least our religious leaders say publicly that atheistic Communism is one result of our neglect of real Christianity. The peril about applications of this kind is of course that it is difficult not to be blinkered by patriotic prejudice. It is easy enough to confess your own sin if you are persuaded that the other fellow is a greater sinner than you are, and that in the end you will be saved and he destroyed. We may not, therefore, apply the words of a prophet to our own situation by any rule of thumb. We need to have something of his religious insight. We must in some measure be prophets ourselves if we are to be theologians.

One need not, however, be a theologian, or religious, or even believe in God, to recognise the broad truth of what Isaiah said about Israel and Assyria. We may account for the situation in the eighth century B.C. and its modern parallels by saying that it lies somehow in the nature of things that moral laxity is self-destructive, that where the fibre of a nation decays, that nation invites attack from some vigorous barbarian who then falls the more heavily in proportion to his overweening lust for power. It is possible to depersonalise and de-theologise the whole principle. Most people do, and even theologians are shy of associating the principle too closely with any direct activity on God's part. It is precisely here that the Old Testament is so uncompromising, and if we are going to write Old Testament theology — doctrine about God — we must begin with, and stick to, our text. That text everywhere presupposes that God is personal. This affirmation of divine personality, or, to use the Old Testament phrase for it, that Yahweh is the *living God*, is the centre of gravity for Old Testament religion. Even the covenant idea is second in importance to it; or perhaps I should say that faith in the living God is the presupposition to there being any covenant between God and man. Hebrew

religion, speaking broadly, was corporate before it was individual. Indeed, religion was corporate long before Yahweh, and Moses and his Israelites, were heard of, and it continued to be corporate for long after the time of Moses. But it was Yahweh's confrontation of Moses, and His " Come now therefore, and I will send thee to Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt ", that made possible a relationship between God and man different from anything religion had yet known. Whatever we may make of the historicity of much in the Moses story, this confrontation of Moses by Yahweh, and the charge which Yahweh laid upon Moses, bears the stamp of verisimilitude. It is of precisely the same pattern as the calls of other prophets in historical situations and for specific tasks, calls which have all the appearance of historical actuality: " Yahweh took me from following the flock, and Yahweh said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel " (Amos 7.15); " I saw Yahweh . . . and he said, Go, and tell this people " (Isa. 6.1, 9); " Yahweh put forth his hand, and touched my mouth, and Yahweh said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth " (Jer. 1.9). Such passages are not recast by tradition out of now lost *ipsissima verba*. They are *ipsissima verba*. It is because God encountered men as He encountered the prophets of Israel that Israel became what Israel was. The gravitational centre of Hebrew religion is the prophetic consciousness of being apprehended by the living God. Around that centre there gathered all sorts of traditions and institutions, later to be embodied in the literature as we now have it. Much on its outer circumference is of no particular theological significance. Some of it may even be morally objectionable, and we are only asking for trouble if we try and revive the habit of giving to it some specific Christian meaning. But everything is precious that throws light upon the people of whom were the prophets and to whom Christ came.

If, then, we are to speak of Old Testament Theology we must take seriously, and put first, the concept of divine personality, of the living God active in history, and accept the consequences. We can do no other. If the philosopher must boggle at it, and ask how it is possible to reconcile it with his metaphysical postulates, then he must. We too, according to the measure of our philosophical competence, must ask whether

and how the God of the Bible can be God as the philosophers think God ought to be. But the foundation of our theology must be in the Bible. It must rest upon the fact, which historical criticism has done so much to establish, that a succession of prophets beginning with Moses knew themselves to be apprehended by the living God. We are not prophets; nevertheless, most of us can humbly say that God laid hold upon us in essentially the same way as He laid hold of the prophets. This is not mere subjectivism; the primary *datum* is God's revelation and call, not our response.

In his recent book, *The Hebrew Prophetic Consciousness*, Dr. Harold Knight has made out a case for basing a Hebrew-Christian metaphysic upon the implications of the prophetic consciousness. He maintains that the " philosophical repercussions of the Hebrew prophetic consciousness . . . have consequences of the utmost importance for Christian theology. Indeed, they lead us towards the formulation of a world-view which furnishes a sure metaphysical basis for the central affirmations of the Christian faith concerning the Incarnation and the Atonement." Whatever we may think of some things in the first half of his book, I can only state my own conviction that the second part is as promising a contribution to the problem of Old Testament theology as has yet appeared. He must, of course, be read for himself, but briefly summarised, his position is this: (1) " Revelation is not the quasi-magical impartation of abstract truth but such an apprehension of living truth as is integral to the soul's dynamic experience of fellowship with God "; (2) " The spiritual receptiveness of the prophet argues some kind of kinship between man and God "; (3) " The idea of the personality of God is central to the theology implied in the prophetic consciousness "; (4) " God is revealed to the prophets, not in the hidden changeless simplicity of His eternal being, but in the specific and pathetic determination of that being by the world of man "; (5) " The prophetic awareness of God is the awareness of the divine demand mediated through some time-situation, a right reaction to which is the means whereby man realises his fellowship with God "; (6) " The historical event becomes revelatory of the divine because it is subjected to the overruling omnipotence of God and made to subserve the ends He has chosen." It is

obvious that the special characteristics of this Hebrew-Christian metaphysic are in sharp contrast to the Greek outlook which has so largely dominated official Christian theology.

The obscuring of the authentic Hebrew-Christian world-view began much earlier than with the humanism of the Renaissance. It goes back to the efforts of the early Christian Fathers to interpret the faith in terms of Greek philosophy. Elmslie quotes even Davidson to the effect that "the effort of this age is to get behind the Greek influences, and to teach Christianity as the Semitic mind presented it and left it" (*The Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 250). His own judgment is that "it has grown more and more evident that to understand the prophets . . . opens the direct road to the deepest apprehension of what Christ taught, of how He taught it, and of what He Himself uniquely was." As to the historic Creeds: "The Creeds safeguarded the metaphysical and historical character of the Faith by giving correct (i.e. orthodox) replies to certain subtle and dangerous misconceptions propounded in the Greek and Roman Age. . . . But it is matter of fact that in the first few centuries of the Christian era Greek dialectical ability changed the mode of presenting the claims of Faith and Duty. It ceased to be the method used by the great Prophets, the method used by Christ Himself, and the method used by the Apostles. What had been simple but profound became profoundly intellectual" (op. cit., p. 17). In a word, "the *Christian* Greeks enriched the Faith by giving it the definition and defence required by the mentality of the Greek and Roman Age. But they enfeebled the amazing power with which Semitic genius had endowed it" (ibid., p. 18 note).

For well-nigh two centuries now Old Testament study has been mainly occupied with the History of Hebrew Religion. For that purpose it has had to employ the varied methods of criticism. It has had to deal with great masses of archaeological materials. Many new languages have been deciphered, and none of us makes any pretence to knowing them all. The horizons of our field have become almost inconceivably wide. We are simply compelled to specialise, and to the outsider we may look like so many moles, each myopically busy in his own particular clod. And indeed, I suppose, many of the things we study can have about as little relation to theology as researches

in secular history have. It all depends upon the spirit in which we pursue them, whether we still hear the voice that summoned us to study the Scriptures. There are many who tell us that we have dwelt long enough in this mountain, that what we are doing has ceased to be important, even for the Church, and that it is high time we turned our attention to something more profitable. For my part, I should hesitate to take refuge in the plea that as a learned society we have as much right to pursue our particular historical and academic studies as another society might exercise to pursue researches into (say) the Aztek civilisation. The majority of us are ministers, as well as members of this Society, and our studies ought to contribute to the present theological revival. I believe they are doing this. If what we are asked for is Theology, the disjunctive "Old Testament Theology or the History of Hebrew Religion" is, like most other disjunctives, a false disjunctive. We set out to study the History of Hebrew Religion. It begins to appear that what we have done is to lay bare the foundations of a theology which has been partially buried for some sixteen centuries. It is the theology that lies at the heart of the evangelical experience, Catholic and Protestant, and, if only for that reason, it has never been altogether lost. We may easily be tempted to think of it as something that has to do with faith and piety rather than with theology proper. Actually it is of decisive significance. Indeed, we may venture to assert that no literature, ancient or modern, is more relevant to the circumstances of our time than this which is the matter of our study.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY AND THE LIFE EVERLASTING[1]

by The Rev. Dr. J. S. WHALE

The golden ripple on the wall came back again, and nothing else stirred in the room. The old, old fashion! The fashion that came in with our first garments, and will last unchanged until our race has run its course, and the wide firmament is rolled up like a scroll. The old, old fashion—Death!

O thank God, all who see it, for that older fashion yet, of Immortality! And look upon us, angels of young children, with regards not quite estranged, when the swift river bears us to the ocean!

Deathbed scenes in Victorian literature are often so drenched with sentimentality that it is difficult to read them aloud to-day. But I have quoted those words of Dickens about the death of Paul Dombey because they ring true; the testimony of the ages is in them. They have a universal appeal because they express the pathos of man's mortality and his immemorial hope of everlasting life.

1. The Fact of Death and its Meaning

All men are mortal. We begin there because we must. For all things living, death is the inescapable, unrehearsable, unknowable, final doom; and what is always true of plants and animals is also true for man, who " thinks he was not made to die ". He too must come to dusty death at the last.

In one sense, then, death is natural to man. The one absolute certainty for every human life is a natural law to which we are subject along with the flower of the field and the beasts that perish. Why then does death distress us? Why should man's natural transitoriness be the cause of a deep and abiding melancholy? Is not this a morbid obsession, as some sturdily contend? If " dust to dust " be a law of nature, is there not something unnatural about the 90th Psalm? And is not Bacon's verdict that of commonsense: " It is as natural to die as to be born "?

The answer is twofold, and it springs out of the basic paradox of human existence.

In the first place, man feels that death, though natural, is

[1] Drew Lecture, 1948.

also unnatural. As Paul Tillich has argued in one of his remarkable sermons,[1] something in man rebels at death—not only at the death of children or of young people in their strength, but also of old people with their irreplaceable individuality, experience and wisdom. We rebel at the sight of a corpse. Tillich means that the natural law whereby dust must return to dust does not fully cover or explain our human situation. We do not and cannot accept our transitoriness as an exhaustive account of our being.

And the reason is plain: man is *aware* of his transitoriness as the animals can never be; they die, but man alone knows that he has to die; which means that he has transcended his finiteness in the very act of being aware of it. Moreover, his knowledge that he has to die is the result of his knowledge that he is somehow above death. Indeed, it is only because he is already aware of the ocean of eternity that he can speak at all of this bank and shoal of time. Only because he thus transcends the life of elephant or beaver or Yellow Dog Dingo can he realise that he is like them. His melancholy at his transitoriness is rooted, therefore, in his inalienable power to look beyond it. In the very act of calling themselves *θνητοί* ("mortals"), the Greeks had already stretched out their hands in longing to another shore, across the stream of time. It is the light of the Eternal which alone casts the shadow of our temporality, whereof Death is the supreme external manifestation.

In short, death is an abiding mystery because man is. The dominant and recurring theme on every page of Niebuhr's Gifford Lectures is this basic paradox of human existence—namely, man's involvement in finiteness and his transcendence over it. His life has eternal meaning because God has set eternity in his heart; his life is nevertheless meaningless because it ends in death. He is both free from time's corruption and yet subject to it; he is at once immortal and yet mortal. Death is not only the end in the sense of life's goal; it is also the end in the sense of life's destruction. To cry "Out, out, brief candle!" and to contend that this is merely nature's law, is to ignore this fundamental paradox. Unless man's incompleteness is somehow completed beyond death, there is nothing for him but despair.

[1] *The Shaking of the Foundations.*

How then does man resolve this mysterious tension within him between time and eternity? The answer given by all human experience is that he intensifies it, presumptuously claiming to resolve it by his own resources. He worships false eternals set up by human pride; he is a sinner. He himself will complete that incompleteness of which his having to die is the grim symbol.

In the second place, therefore, death is not merely natural law; something more than man's transitoriness creates that ultimate fear of death from which all other human fears derive their power. Man knows that he has lost his eternity by his sinful separation from the Eternal in whose image he is made.[1] To his natural and inescapable mortality there is added the burden of guilt. To his metaphysical distress there is added this moral distress. We are slaves of fear, says Tillich, not only because we have to die, but because we deserve to die.[2]

Text books of logic remind us that "all men are mortal", and to the modern mind these words mean one of three things. They may mean Materialism, which asserts that life is merely the sum-total of the forces which resist death, and that when our bodily functions cease that is the end of us. Or they may mean some form of Spiritualism, which asserts that though the body is buried the spirit survives. Or they may mean some form of philosophical Idealism, which asserts the immortality of the soul. But the witness of the Bible is different. It sees in death life's last opportunity, its decisive spiritual crisis, its final choice. Death is not only the supreme external manifestation of temporality; it is the crucial form of the abiding question whether we will have God or no. As Dr. John Marsh[3] has put it: "the issue of death is not whether we have souls or not; nor yet, having them, whether they merely survive the body or are immortal: it is whether we will live with God, which is heaven; or without Him, which is hell."

When James Denney described death as "the sacrament of sin" he meant that just as a sacrament signifies what it symbolises and in some sense conveys it, so death signifies and conveys the stark fact of sin as rebellion against God and separation from God. Just because we abuse our self-transcendence, our sense and taste for the Infinite, our capacity for creative

[1] Isa. 59.2 [2] op. cit. p. 171. [3] In a private paper.

initiation—in the service of unlimited desire with its proud will-to-power—death's sting is explained not only by our awareness of our temporality but also by our sense of guilt. Just because what St. Paul calls the " carnal mind " is hostile to God, man's deepest need is forgiveness and redemption. For a Christian, therefore, the final meaning of Immortality is not survival, but salvation.

In short—and to anticipate the main contention of this lecture—we shall not begin to understand that baffling phrase in the Creed about the Resurrection of the Body, unless we recognise at the outset that redemption is not some mysterious alchemy or magic inoculation which makes us immortal, as Greek theology often tended to suggest. Redemption is moral; it must be concerned with the corrupt and enslaved will of man and not merely with his creaturely finiteness; it must be justification at the hands of God Himself, even while we are yet sinners. It must declare convincingly that our future is not determined by our past, and that as is the holy wrath of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, so is the everlasting mercy which puts us right with Him. " I am at once a sinner, and yet right with God ", said Luther, in a paradox which he knew to be impossible to explain and very dangerous to preach. *Simul peccator et justus.* We are justified—made right with God—not because of anything meritorious which we have done, but because of something which the Eternal God Himself has done, subjecting Himself to transitoriness and death and hell, in the Person and Work of His Son, that He might save us unto eternal life. God Himself, in the Action and Passion of a mortal Man, has conquered the damning power of Death. In short, the argument for Immortality which is distinctively Christian, is the forgiveness of sins. The Christian doctrine of Immortality is salvation through Jesus Christ.

2. The Redeeming Action of the Eternal

The Christian doctrine of Salvation: details apart, what does it mean, and what is its distinctive genius? I shall try to show that there is no phrase in the Creed which better expresses and sums up that genius than its last two affirmations—" I believe in the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life everlasting."

Though *The Pilgrim's Progress* is no longer one of the best

known books in our language, modern men remember its opening sentence. They have only to reflect on the latest news-bulletin to understand what that sentence means. Bunyan was not giving way either to cynicism or to a despairing other-worldliness when he called our world a wilderness. His biblical idiom may be strange to the men of this generation, but the mystery of iniquity to which it points is familiar enough. This prisoner in Bedford Gaol wrote as he did because he had looked steadily at abiding facts and measured their radical evil against that world which the Creator had seen to be very good, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

Indeed, this metaphor of pilgrimage through a barren land belongs to the Church from the beginning, and is the basic pattern of the Gospel of our redemption. It springs out of the sacred history recorded and interpreted in the Old Testament, and belongs not only to the piety nurtured on the whole Bible but to the classics of religious literature which that piety has inspired in every age. No one, presumably, would call Charles Wesley morbid; as a boy he was Captain of Westminster School and he lived sturdily to the age of eighty-one. We need not presuppose a disordered liver or a temperamental love of gloom to account for his once-popular hymn, " Come on, my partners in distress ", which bids his comrades in the wilderness look beyond this vale of tears to the heavenly Jerusalem. The fact is that Wesley refused to be sentimental about the pathos of man's mortality and the corruption of man's heart. Because he never failed to reckon with tears and sin and death—things which abide[1]—he was able, as few have been, to rejoice in the Gospel which triumphed over them. In the next generation John Keats criticised the words " vale of tears " as " a little circumscribed notion " and substituted for them " a vale of soul-making ". Yet we prefer the testimony of his poetry to this theological criticism. Keats, too, felt " the giant agony of the world ", and there is no facile optimism in the wonderful *Ode to the Nightingale*. Like his contemporary Byron, who spoke of the " deep melancholy of history ", Keats knew, and confessed in his own way, that the greatest of all human concerns is redemption.

[1] One of Virgil's untranslatable lines expresses this familiar pathos of mortality as the sense of tears in things:

Sunt lacrymae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.

Redemption from what? What is the evil from which our Saviour bids us pray to be delivered? Of the several types of answer which men have given to this question, only one concerns us here since, in rejecting it decisively, the Christian religion discloses its own unique genius and meaning.

I refer to that type of thought and piety which, *mutatis mutandis*, has appealed to some men from Plato onwards—that gnosticism ancient and modern which sees redemption as deliverance of the spiritual part of man from an unredeemable world of matter. The material body is the enemy; this muddy vesture of decay is the evil to be sloughed off. Since he cannot escape the familiar paradox that man is compounded of both "nature" and "spirit", the gnostic resolves it in terms of a pessimistic dualism. He argues that because man is both a physical organism and a conscious self, he is always implicated in the finiteness which, as a spiritual being, he nevertheless transcends. That is true: but the gnostic doesn't stop there; he goes on to argue that the way of salvation must therefore be the way of escape; that this contingent and dependent existence in the body is evil because it is finite, tied and bound. For him it is the base material body rather than man's rebellious will which is the source of sin. Even for Aristotle the state of the soul during its sojourn in the body is not normal but diseased. And it is notorious that Plato sometimes regards death, not as the last enemy of man but as his Deliverer, and thus anticipates that quintessence of gnostic pessimism that the body is a tomb.[1] Indeed, he anticipates those mystics for whom the desire to be set free from sin leads ultimately to a longing for deliverance from temporal existence itself: we ought to remember that it is as a mystic rather than as a Lutheran that Bach sings "Come, sweet Death".[2] In short, the gnostic in all generations argues that the pure gold of man's immortal spirit must be set free from the base material alloy of finite individuality; and for him salvation consists either in the ultimate loss of individuality, as in mysticism; or the self is divided into a particular and a universal self, as in Hegelianism, and to pass from the former to the latter is to be redeemed.

But we have not so learned Christ, who took flesh and dwelt

[1] *Τὸ μὲν σῶμά ἐστιν ἡμῖν σῆμα* (*Gorg.* 493A); cf. St. Paul who knows that the body is not a tomb, but a temple.

[2] "Komm süsser Tod."

among us, sharing to the full all the conditions of our empirical humanity. To call man's finite life in the body evil, as though it were no part of that creation which God saw to be very good; and to assume the essential sinlessness of man's spirit, as though this ethereal part of him were a manifestation of the uncreated and the divine, is to repudiate the very genius of biblical religion and the redemptive meaning of the Incarnation. The Scriptures know nothing either of man as infinite and eternal spirit or of his finite body as its essentially sinful prison-house. The very distinction is meaningless to a faith which knows that *all* existence is of God, and therefore created and finite. Man's world of nature and spirit, of body and soul, is not evil because it is finite. God Himself made this world to be the theatre of His glory; and to this end He made the creature called man in His own image, marvellously compact of the physical and the spiritual in an indissoluble unity. This faith alone reveals the true dimension of man's spirit and gives to his history in time its eternal possibilities and meaning. Indeed, the Christian religion is as much " materialist " in its doctrinal emphasis as it is spiritual and transcendental. If it judges Falstaff for his sensuality, the Gospel of the Incarnate Redeemer also judges St. Simeon Stylites for his asceticism. Our faith takes this world seriously, reckoning realistically with the hurly-burly of its history, and refusing to belittle—much less to ignore or repudiate in the name of a false spirituality—the physical foundation and structure of man's spiritual existence in time.

Thus the Christian doctrine of redemption does not speak of the resurrection of an immaterial and immortal soul but of " the resurrection of the body (*σῶμα*) ". This is the characteristic and distinctive symbolism with which Christianity proclaims man's victory over death. Whenever Christian theology has allowed itself to emphasise a bodiless spirituality, it has forgotten its own Hebraic genius. Christianity means what it says when it asserts the unity of " body " and " soul ".

Indeed, following the Hebraic psychology of the Old Testament the central classical tradition of Christianity has asserted this indissoluble unity of " body " and " soul " in many ways. It has seen that both the Matthaean and the Lucan versions of the Beatitudes—the one spiritual, the other material in emphasis—are right, because they constitute a unity. It has

remembered that the first sign whereby Jesus revealed His messianic vocation was His healing of bodily as well as mental diseases. It has confessed that the human body is the mysterious meeting-place of nature with history; indeed, in the Body of Christ nature is united with history; nature reaches its fulfilment in that Body which is the perfect organ of the Spirit; it is this mystery which is fundamental to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.[1]

To give the supreme example of its " materialist " emphasis, the Christian faith seems to speak unequivocally of the resurrection of the body. The phrase so translated into English is difficult and even misleading, notoriously enough. It does not and never did[2] mean the resurrection of our mortal flesh, the restoration in the eternal world of the self-same material particles of which our earthly bodies are composed—flesh and blood, bone and muscle—this mortal context of our personal life, standing five feet nine inches high (it may be) and weighing ten stone. Such a conception, alien to biblical psychology, would have horrified St. Paul. The resurrection of the body reminds us, rather, that the Bible does not affirm, with Plato, the essential immortality of the soul, since it never thinks of soul and body as two separate entities; it does not put asunder what the Creator has joined. Body and soul belong together as a created unity, and neither may be understood apart from the other. The body is the necessary organ of human personality in history, a vehicle indispensable to and inseparable from the creative will of man, the essential workshop of his perilous freedom. Holy Scripture knows nothing of disembodied spirit. To the Hebrew, " soul " without " body " would have been as meaningless as content without shape, or music without sound. He would have been as baffled by such a notion as was Alice, when the Cheshire Cat vanished leaving only its smile.

Therefore, the Christian Gospel of redemption here comes

[1] See P. Tillich, *The Protestant Era*, p. 106. This, his latest volume, is a profound commentary on what he calls elsewhere " corporal being as the end of the ways of God ". See pp. 131 and 167 with their insistence that the " soul " as the vital and emotional ground from which the self-conscious personality arises, includes the " body ". " The body is the immediate expression and the form of the self-realisation of the soul." Indeed, this corresponds to the interrelation of the personality with things and community.

[2] That it sometimes came erroneously to mean *resurrectio carnis*, especially at certain epochs of Christian history, is undeniable. See Kirsopp Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of S. Paul*, on I Corinthians 6.12, 10.8 and 15.

to its climax in all its majesty and comfort. Its final testimony is that the life which we live by grace in the body of our humiliation finds its conservation and true destiny in God the Redeemer. He alone is sufficient for our mortal life, who made it. Moreover, our faith moves in the realm of hard fact, even when testifying to what eye hath not seen nor ear heard. For the last enemy of man is always the fact of death, and we sinners cannot escape that last inexorable frustration. But the Redeemer will bring us through that frustration, giving to us a spiritual " body ", distinct from its mortal counterpart, yet inherently one with it as its organic *continuum*. Man's redeemed and risen life beyond death would indeed be " naked " if it had no continuous identity with what it was here in the order of time and sense; the glittering tumult of history would be but a shadow play with no final reality to give it meaning. Time itself would be no more than the moving image of eternity; its events would not be taken up into eternity, giving actuality to God's redeeming purpose towards us and so becoming part of eternity. Redemption would be the dissolution of all our values rather than their recreation unto eternal life; and the Church militant itself which God loved, which Christ purchased and which the Holy Ghost sanctifies, could never come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, triumphing in heavenly places as the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

But the Christian Gospel of redemption is a Word from the Beyond to all who will receive it by faith, making them partakers of a victory won *here* by the eternal God Himself, in and through the stuff of *historic* Action and Passion. This victory makes actual " the powers of the age to come ", as the earnest of our inheritance in the heavenly kingdom. It is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

3. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead

This is and always will be the supreme Christian mystery. We cannot begin to understand what happened when " He rose again from the dead "—that is, *how* it happened. Our concern is not with the " how " of a sheer miracle which is alien to all our experience and inscrutable to all our science, but with its essential meaning. It means at least three things.

First, the Resurrection insists that Jesus was man in the

most typical of all human experiences. He not only lived our human life. He died the human death. He was crucified, dead and buried. But, like the first Docetists we do not willingly conceive of death as meaning the nothingness of which burial in a grave is the *signum efficax*. We fondly persuade ourselves that neither He nor we can be thus buried, but only an unimportant part of man—namely the physical body. But burial means an absolute break with what has been; the Bible describes this break as being " cut off from the land of the living "; it is nothing less than the removal of the whole personality from the world. The Bible insists that the personality may not be separated from the body, as though the body were something accidental. And the essential fact is that the body is buried. The grave is the realistic symbol of the awful finality of death. Moreover, Christ was buried; this was part of what it meant for Him to become Man. To be the Christ He, too, had to be dead and buried.

Second, the Creed adds that He descended into Hell. The tremendous words mean that in that Descent He was fulfilling the Incarnation to the uttermost. He not only died the death which mortals must all die. He also died the death which *we* as sinners must all die. In short, He was " made sin " for us. If St. Paul stops short of saying that He was " made guilt " for us, the Creed is more explicit: " He was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into Hell ". That change from the passive to the active voice means that He deliberately knew the dreadful banishment from the bosom of the Father, the agony of the utter and final separation from God at death which cries across the centuries and the continents in the Cry of Dereliction —" Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani ".[1]

Third, the Resurrection is a Gospel only against this realistic background.[2] It was the Reformers who, in opposition to medieval dualism rediscovered this biblical awareness of man as *totus homo*, a unity of " body " and " soul ". Indeed, their eucharistic theology is consistently faithful to the profound yet familiar principle that God has so ordered His creation that

[1] cf. Calvin, *Inst.* 2.16.10: ". . . diros in anima cruciatus damnati ac perditi hominis pertulerit," i.e. " He endured in His soul the dreadful torments of a condemned and lost man."

[2] Notice how Handel in *The Messiah* passes at once from " Cut off from the land of the living " to " But Thou didst not leave His soul in Hell. . . . Lift up your hearts ".

He visits man's inward being only through the outward. Part of the explanation of Luther's intransigent sacramental doctrine lies in his profound sense of the historical, the outward, the factual—in the Christian revelation. For him, the Christ who is verily present in the Sacrament of the Altar is not only the second person of the Trinity, but the man of flesh and blood going to His death to win forgiveness of sins for the Church of His Body. Thus, what the Word of God brings with it at the Holy Table where Christ says " Take, eat " is " Christ with His flesh and blood—all that He is and has ".[1] To quote a profound sentence from the *Table Talk*: " The world dislikes and cannot endure a *deus corporeus* who is born, preaches, convicts the world, is crucified, dies. On the contrary the world strains every nerve to have and worship Him as *incorporeus*. Thus, however, it can never know Him."[2]

Calvin, too, holds unreservedly to the substantial presence of " Christ with His death and resurrection " in the Lord's Supper. In his eucharistic theology Calvin is not concerned with the eternal Son (i.e. with the Person of the Mediator apart from His Work, so to speak); nor with the *corpus gloriosum* of the ascended Christ (i.e. with the victory of the Mediator apart, so to speak, from His sufferings and death); but with the God-Man of flesh and blood who is verily ὁμοούσιος ἡμῖν who conjoins us to Himself in the communion of His Body and Blood, and who feeds and nourishes us with *all* the benefits of His passion and victory.

Communion with Christ (which for Calvin is the essential meaning of our salvation—*in sacram cum Christo unitatem coaluimus*[3]) is communion with His whole person, and therefore with His flesh and blood.[4]

Again, the Reformers' debate over the Ascension is concerned with the same issue. The Lutherans complained that the Calvinist defence of the local as against the illocal view of the Ascension was either rationalism or puerility. This criticism did not touch Calvin, who was not thinking *mathematice vel localiter* but biblically. " What? Do we place Christ midway among the spheres, or do we build a cottage for Him among the planets (*tugurium . . . inter planetas*)? . . . Our reason for

[1] W.A. xi.433.
[2] *Tischreden* (W.A.) i.467.
[3] C.R. ix.81.
[4] *Inst.* 4.17.11.

saying that Christ is not concealed under the bread . . . is that He is superior to all elements and dwells beyond the world. . . . But though the Body carried above the heavens is exempt from the common order of nature, it does not cease to be a true body."[1] This means that though Calvin understands " the right hand of God " theologically (and *not* in terms of astronomical physics!), as an expression of God's transcendent sovereignty,[2] it is nevertheless a matter of deepest theological significance for him that Christ's Body in all its ascended glory is still a body (*non tamen verum esse corpus desinit*). Calvin, in short, is as much opposed to a false spiritualisation as to a false materialisation of the ascended Body (see *Inst.* 4.17.32). It is a Mediator of flesh and blood who, having decisively overcome our world of sin and death, now belongs entirely to the divine eternal world. This, therefore, is the basis of the Christian hope, while the world passeth away and the lusts thereof; it is the only presupposition of a true Christian eschatology.

Calvin is concerned here, as always, with the deepest issues of soteriology. " If Christ has not taken to the eternal world our true flesh in which He was born and with which He suffered, our hope is poverty-stricken and slender (*infirma et fragilis*) indeed."[3] We cannot use all Calvin's categories; but we should remember in our own way what he could never forget, namely that our hope of salvation is hope not only of *eternal* life in God, but also of eternal *life*; that is, life which forms an organic *continuum* with real, bodily life here in this world of time and sense.[4]

That is what the " Resurrection of the Body " means. The language used is symbolism, necessary to the intellect though inconceivable by the imagination. It leaves the mystery of the Easter miracle as such, and yet it bodies it forth—God raising His incarnate Son from the dead, bringing Him from the death and separation of Hell to His own eternal glory, and bringing us His brethren with Him. " For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

[1] C.R. ix.79. [2] *Inst.* 4.17.18. [3] *Inst.* 4.17.29.

[4] See W. Künneth *Theologie der Auferstehung*, a brave attempt to present a critical apologetic in terms of all the New Testament data; cf. also R. Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, Vol. II, ch. 10, §2 on " The New Testament Idea of the End ".

UNIVERSALISM—IS IT HERETICAL?

by The Rev. Dr. J. A. T. ROBINSON

The description of the doctrine of universal salvation by Brunner in his recent *Dogmatik* (1, 363) as a " menacing heresy, endangering the Biblical faith ", raises acutely a problem that has divided theologians since the days of Origen. Though formally condemned as heresy by the fifth ecumenical council, the doctrine has frequently found advocates of disconcerting eminence in the ranks of theology. It is impossible to ignore, for instance, a concensus of contemporary names such as Nicolas Berdyaev, William Temple, John Baillie, C. H. Dodd, Charles Raven and Herbert Farmer, all of whom have come out more or less openly in its favour. Nor can they all be labelled, and dismissed, as liberals. Is Brunner right, therefore, in saying that a doctrine of universal restoration is wholly incompatible with a truly *Biblical* theology?

It is important to see, as Brunner does, that this issue is central to the Christian doctrine of God, and not the peripheral topic of speculation for which it has frequently been taken. The Bible believes that God's nature is to be known and studied, not as He is in Himself, but always as He reveals and vindicates Himself in relation to the purposes He has to achieve and the powers He has to conquer. God is what He *asserts* Himself to be; and the final proof of that assertion is to be sought in the last chapter of history. Eschatology is integral to the Bible because its God is a God of history. Whereas to the Greek the essential is what is true *timelessly*, to the Hebrew it is what is *still* true *at the end of time*. The eternal is that which outstays the assault of the final enemy and yet abides. That God will assuredly vindicate Himself in the face of His adversaries is the sheet-anchor of the Biblical faith and the meaning of its ascription to Him of eternity. *How* He maintains Himself as God and the *nature* of His final lordship is therefore at the same time the answer to *what* He essentially is. The truth or falsity of the universalistic assertion, that in the end He is

Lord entirely of a world *wanting* His lordship, is consequently determinative of the whole Christian doctrine of the nature of God. If it is false, then Brunner is right in scenting and exposing its terrible menace.

If the nature of God is revealed in His will, and His will in His purpose in history, what does the Bible say this purpose is? It is something declared completely only in the events of the New Testament; but there it is stated quite explicitly. " It was the purpose of His design so to order it in the fulness of the ages that all things in heaven and earth alike should be gathered up in Christ " (Eph. 1.10, Moffatt). It is the Father's good pleasure through Christ " to reconcile all things unto Himself . . . . whether things upon the earth or things in the heavens " (Col. 1.20). Christ is therefore the propitiation, not for our sins only, " but also for the whole world " (1 John 2.2), for God sent His Son " that the world should be saved through Him " (John 3.17). " God willeth that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2.4). And not only men; for with this " revealing of the sons of God " goes the hope that " the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God " (Rom. 8.19-21). Hence the promise of " the restoration of all things " (Acts 3.21), when, at the end, the universe shall be brought back sinless to that relationship to God in and for which He made it. This, as far as man is concerned, means that love shall be solely regnant in a perfect mutuality of communion and knowledge. In simplest language, God's sole will of love is to be loved by all whom He has created for love.

Now to call this will of love divine is at the same time to confess it omnipotent. By omnipotence the Bible means no such abstract quality as " the power to do anything not inherently self-contradictory " (Aquinas). To name God " almighty " is an act of faith, often a desperate act of faith, that He *cannot* be mocked, that, despite all appearance, He has the measure of every other world power, and is omnicompetent to maintain His nature and fulfil His purpose in a world athwart His love. If there was anything that could prevent this fulfilment, then that power would be stronger than the Divine love, and God less than all-mighty. The consummation, as much as the initia-

tion, of this will of love is grounded in a necessity of the Divine nature.

But at once a problem arises. For this very statement seems to throw doubt on the reality of freedom, which love presupposes in order to be a power at all. Is it not a contradiction to say that all must be saved by love? For if they must be saved, then salvation would appear to mean something other than free response to love. What becomes of the power to reject if all must accept?

The dilemma may be stated thus. *Either* Love is omnipotent (this is a necessary statement if God is to be God, i.e. infinite): in which case it *must* conquer. But this " must " involves the elimination of the very thing which makes its victory a victory of love—viz. freedom. By the very fact, therefore, that He *is* omnipotent and *does* necessarily fulfil His purpose, God contradicts Himself and works His own defeat. *Or* freedom is absolutely inviolable (this is a necessary statement if God is to be God, i.e. love): in which case there can be no *necessity* in His victory. And this means there is no necessity that God can be Himself—almighty and unbounded. But the very possibility that He could not be what He is once more involves Him in self-contradiction. Thus, the inevitable conclusion appears to be that the ideas of omnipotence and love are themselves mutually contradictory. God cannot be omnipotent love.

Now if one is not to rest in this position, which would cut at the heart of the whole Christian doctrine of God, there are two courses open. *Either* one must be prepared to show that the possibility that all are not saved is compatible with the Divine omnipotence, *or* one must establish that the necessity for all to be saved involves no infringement of freedom, and therefore no denial of God's love. It is at this point that traditional orthodoxy and the doctrine of universalism diverge.

The first position is defended by St. Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologica* (I, 19.6.1). He supports the thesis that " God's will is always fulfilled " despite the Scriptural assertion that God " willeth that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth ", of which he says simply *hoc non ita evenit*. He offers three interpretations of the text which might bring it into line with what he regards as observed

fact. The first two are merely sophistical, and he rests nothing on them. The third, which he cites from John of Damascus, runs as follows. A distinction must be drawn between the antecedent or absolute will of God and His consequent or conditioned will (without implying by this any idea of temporal antecedence or change of mind). Absolutely, God wills all to be saved, in the same way as a just judge desires in general that each man should live rather than die. But in the same way as the judge must will that a homicide should be hanged, so God's consequent will is that some should be damned, since His justice demands it (*secundum exigentiam suae justitiae*). What, therefore, God does in general will to happen may not take place, since there are circumstances in which to will it would mean that He would be willing something evil or unjust. But what God does actually (i.e. consequently) will in any given situation always comes to pass. In this way St. Thomas seeks to combine the possibility of damnation with the complete fulfilment of the Divine will. The exercise of freedom to reject salvation does not destroy the omnipotence of God.

The essential contention of this argument, which, in some form or other, must be that of all who would wish to defend the same position, is that what is apparently a change of will (from saving to damning) is based, not in any external inhibition of the Divine power, but in the internal constancy of God's nature itself. There is no contradiction of this nature in the condemning of those He created for love: rather, this is the expression of its very consistency. The contradiction would be that God should save those who by their sin have made themselves worthy only of punishment. For then He would be false to His own nature of *holy* love.

Let us analyse this contention a little closer. The assumption that underlies it is that in His love God wills all men to be saved, but that His justice requires many to be damned. Many would wish to cover up such a bald antithesis, but it is, nevertheless, ineluctably present in some form. St. Thomas, indeed, would have no objection to the statement as it stands. But it could be altered to present a more acceptable appearance, in which case it would run something like this. The Divine power is not defeated by the fact that God's antecedent will of love is not fulfilled. For it is a power which is equally

one of justice. A failure to convert is not really or finally a failure: the Divine nature is still vindicated in condemnation. God's glory and power are always perfected, whether in the life or death of the creature, whether in mercy or in judgment. If men will not be drawn by His love, they shall bow to His justice. In each case He is omnipotent: He has not failed.

But under whatever form or disguise it appears, this solution cannot satisfy, because it cannot preserve the absolute identity of the Divine love and the Divine justice. For, ultimately, these are not two parallel attributes, each of which stands for a different requirement of God's nature. Rather is His justice a quality of His love, a characterisation of its working. His is a love of cauterising holiness and of a righteousness whose only response to evil is the purity of a perfect hate. Wrath and justice are but ways in which such love must show itself to be love in the face of its denial. If it appeared in any other form, it would be less than perfect love. It is most important to hold to the fact that justice is in no sense a substitute for love, which comes into operation when the other has failed to be effective. The impression is often given that God has reserves of power upon which He could fall back if the power of love were to fail; that souls that cannot be won to a free response fall under a judgment condemning them to an involuntary destruction.[1] But God has no power but the power

[1] Cf. Brunner, *The Mediator*, 551: "He wishes to make Himself known as love, as far as this is possible; but He must also make Himself known as the holy righteous Judge when this is inevitable." Brunner never really succeeds in holding together the holiness and the love of God. Cf: "God is not simply Love. He *defines* Himself as Love. Love is His Will, not His Nature, although it is His eternal Will. As His Nature, however, even in Christ we must worship His sovereign majesty and His holiness" (ib. 282); and: "This is not to be understood as if in the final analysis lordship or the holiness of God could be reduced to His love, so that it would suffice to speak about God's love. Not without reason the Bible time and time again speaks of both as of two very different things" (*The Divine-Human Encounter*, 43-4). Admittedly the identification of the two took place only gradually, but the O.T. surely leaves no doubt as to the direction of the movement (cf. especially Hosea). In the N.T. the gap is closed. God's "sovereign majesty and holiness" reveals itself as none other than the love of Him who "took a towel and girded Himself": "Ye call me, Master, and, Lord, and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet . . ." (John 13.13-14). The Divine will to power and lordship appears as the omnipotence of dying love (John 12.32-33).

In his latest book Brunner admits that "in Christ" the holiness and the love of God are identical (*Dogmatik*, 1, 367); but, apart from Christ, no. By this he does not mean merely that a man who has rejected Christ does not *experience* them as identical, in other words, that he cannot perceive the love in the wrath. Rather, outside Christ they really *are* not identical, either for man or for God. He actually

of love, since He has no purpose but the purpose of love and no nature but the nature of love. If that fails, He fails. Justice is no second line of defence: it has no power of its own. For it is none other than love being itself, love, in the face of evil, continuing to exercise its own peculiar power.

Unless this is understood, not only does love become sentimental and forgiveness immoral, but justice becomes sub-Christian. A view of the Divine justice is introduced which can be satisfied with a purely negative assertion of its rights in the condemnation of a sinner. It is regarded as *in no sense a failure* on God's part if some men are committed to eternal punishment or death, because therein the Divine justice is fully vindicated.[2] But no Christian could acquiesce in such a *purely* retributive theory or regard the sending of a criminal to the gallows as reflecting no failure except in the man himself. It would be impossible for a Christian judge to derive entire satisfaction from such a " vindication " of justice or to say that he

rests part of his trinitarian doctrine (I, 244-250) on this " non-identity " of Father and Son. God in Christ is love and light and life—but the Father Himself, apart from Christ, is a God of terrible majesty and holiness, whose visage for sinful man is wrath and darkness and death. It is true it is human sin that forces His holiness to appear as wrath and that acts of judgment and condemnation are His " strange " work. But it remains that there is a part of God (if we may so speak) that is *perfectly satisfied* with the death of a sinner, a justice that is not geared to His overall purpose of love but which automatically comes into operation whenever a man by his own decision falls outside that purpose. This is his interpretation of John 3.36: " He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." But such a wrath of the Father which has no saving purpose and which stands outside the plan of God in Christ—that certainly does not belong to " the witness of the whole New Testament " (I, 246). The final judgment of its pages is rather that " God hath shut up all unto disobedience that He might have mercy upon all " (Rom. 11.32).

It would seem from two works of Brunner's which have appeared in England since the body of this article was written that he has begun to modify his opinion. While stating that " love, the absolute will to self-surrender, is first of all in contradiction to holiness, to the will of absolute self-affirmation ", he goes on to say that the paradox of Christianity lies in their identification in God: " The *Lord* God is the One who loves; His sovereign will is His will for communion " (*Revelation and Reason*, 46). In his Gifford Lectures he goes so far as to say: " God is Love in Himself; He is not justice in Himself. Love is His own essence; justice, however, is His will as it refers to the order of His created world " (*Christianity and Civilisation*, I, 116). This is in flat contradiction to the passage cited above from *The Mediator*, 282, but still contains a most dangerous distinction between the Being and the Will of God.

[2] " It is like saying that a state which was obliged to keep half its citizens perpetually in prison would be as ideal a fatherland as one in which complete absence of crime kept the prisons perpetually empty—provided only that the penal laws were administered with equal justice in the two cases " (J. Baillie, *And The Life Everlasting*, 244).

wills the man's death *simpliciter* (St. Thomas' word), without, that is, any qualms or reservation or sense of frustration. So neither could any Christian ascribe such an attitude to God. Just as every verdict of condemnation in the courts is at the same time a confession of failure on the part of the society which pronounces it, so every final damnation on the part of God would be an admission of the frustration of the omnipotence of His love. Precisely because God's justice is always the sternness of His *love*, such an issue can never be its vindication, nor indeed anything but its hopeless defeat. For death or a purely retributive punishment (which *eternal* punishment must by definition be) is the completest contradiction and denial of love. Because His justice is in no sense antithetical to His love, or even independent of it, but a very way of its working, it is impossible that it should ever be content with a purely negative assertion of itself. Judgment can never be God's last word, because, if it was, it would be the word that would speak His failure. Judgment is, indeed, absolutely necessary, as being that through which alone sinful man can hear the word of mercy. But the sole possible function of judgment can be to enable men to receive the mercy which renders it superfluous. God is the eternal " Yea ", and if His last word is any other than His first—a creative, affirming *Bejahungswort*—then His love is defeated and He is not omnipotent. But that word can only be pronounced upon a creation which is in every respect " very good ". Only if and when all men respond with that " Yes " which they are called into being to give, can God utter the final " consummatum ".

In the last resort there is no way of avoiding the conclusion that any modification of the antecedent will of God to save all implies a concession to a power outside Himself. One may work in terms of the demands of justice and love and thus persuade oneself that the modification is compelled by an internal rather than an external necessity. But the idea of a " consequent " will cannot succeed in clearing itself of the suspicion of being in some degree a falling away from the antecedent, simply because the justice which it embodies is but one element abstracted and isolated from God's holy love. The will to forgive is quenched, and God satisfies Himself with stopping at the point of condemnation. And what is the reason? None other

than that His power to forgive is limited by the recalcitrance of the sinner. There could be nothing in God Himself which would induce Him to be content with this second best. The assertion that this Divine power is completely vindicated as omnipotent in negative judgment is simply an attempt to cover up and justify what is really a disastrous failure. For, antecedently, God's will extends beyond judgment to life. His power is His omnicompetence to fulfil this great purpose of love. And if it should not work out exactly as it was planned, the modifying factor must be sought, not within God's nature, but outside it. Nothing *in God* would make Him will anything but life for all in any circumstances. The slightest modification would be a monument to the power of human self-will to resist the Divine love even to the uttermost. This power would have shown itself to be stronger than God and thereby have reared a final disproof of the omnipotence of His love. Whether He had to condemn to extinction one or millions, God would have failed and failed infinitely. For love could not will such a thing, nor contemplate the prospect of it with anything but abhorrence. Whether this failure is represented simply as the bounding of His omnipotence of love, or as a resort to a power of compulsion other than that of love, makes no difference. In either case a complete contradiction would be set up within the Divine Being: God would simply cease to be God.

So much for the first attempt to overcome the apparent irreconcilability of love and omnipotence in God—the attempt to show that God is still omnipotent love, even if all are not saved.

What, then, of the second alternative, namely, the thesis that the necessary salvation of all is not a denial of human freedom, nor, therefore, of God's love? Can we hope anything more from an attempt to make sense of a love which works by necessity? If all *must* be saved, can any be *saved*, in the only sense which makes the operation a work of love? If freedom and the ultimate capacity for refusal are infringed, what profit is there in such a work of salvation for a God of love? We should remember Kierkegaard's warning: " It would help very little if one persuaded millions of men to accept the truth, if precisely by the method of their acceptance they were transferred into error " (*Unscientific Postscript*, 221).

This warning must be taken with all possible seriousness. Any solution which in any way compromises the fact of freedom stands self-condemned. For without freedom love cannot be love. Love to be a force at all demands the exercise of freedom. You cannot move a chair by loving it, but only a being who is perfectly free not to be moved if he does not wish to be. Love is peculiarly love and its power purely that of love only when this capacity to flout it is presupposed in all its integrity. Depreciate this in the least degree, and love is impotent. Nothing is so helpless as love which can enlist no co-operation. If it cannot draw out men's wills to free response, then it has no other resource: it is finished.

This unswerving insistence on the inviolability of freedom must be maintained from beginning to end if all that follows is not to fall away into self-contradiction and futility. And this insistence is not merely in the interest of human liberty: it is equally necessary in order to safeguard any Christian doctrine of God. For it is evident that God has as much interest in the preservation of our freedom as ever we have ourselves, even in our most self-assertive moods. For if His omnipotence is to be *acknowledged* (and that is the only way in which an omnipotence of love could become effective and victorious), then the freedom required for the acknowledgment must be preserved right to the very end. The very act of submission is an act of freedom and embodies the assertion of its eternal integrity.

This rock of liberty, then, must stand. Are there any indications that an all-compelling love could possibly leave it intact?

It is probable that the mental picture usually conjured up of the relation between Divine omnipotence and human freedom is that of two irresistible forces each pulling in opposite directions. If, *per impossibile*, one were to gain a painful inch here or there, it could only be at the expense of the other's loss: submission to the power of God must involve the abandonment of the freedom of man. But have we any reason to think that this is at all an accurate picture of what happens when will meets will in the personal relationship of love? Surely, it is grossly misleading.

When a man or woman really shows his or her love for us, whether it be in some costing manifestation of forgiveness or

self-sacrifice, or in some small act of kindness or consideration, we feel constrained to respond to it—we cannot help ourselves, everything within us tells us that we must. Our defences are down, the power of love captures the very citadel of our will, and we answer with the spontaneous surrender of our whole being. Yet, at the same time, we know perfectly well that we can, if we choose, remain unmoved; there is no physical compulsion to commit ourselves. Everyone may point to instances in which he has been constrained to thankful response by the overmastering power of love. And yet, under this strange compulsion, has any one ever felt his freedom to be infringed or his personality violated? Is it not precisely at these moments that he becomes conscious, perhaps only for a fleeting space of time, of being himself in a way he never knew before, of attaining a fulness and integration of life which is inextricably bound up with the decision drawn from him by the other's love? Moreover, this is true, however strong be the constraint laid upon him: or, rather, it is truer the stronger it is. Under the constraint of the love of God in Christ this sense of self-fulfilment is at its maximum. The testimony of generations is that here, as nowhere else, service is perfect freedom. In throwing ourselves into an action on behalf of someone we really love in Christ, our whole personality can become united, our intellect and emotions fused, in one all-subordinating purpose of the will, in that complete self-determination in which we know, as at no other time, that we are truly free. When faced by an overpowering act of love, we realise how absurd it is to say that the freedom and integrity of our moral personality are safeguarded only if we set our teeth and determine not to allow ourselves to be won to its service. If, then, we do not lose, but rather find, our freedom in yielding to the constraining power of love, is there anything to be gained for the cause of liberty by demanding that when it is under the control of self-will it shall in the end be stronger than when it is under the control of love? May we not imagine a love so strong that ultimately no one will be able to restrain himself from free and grateful surrender? If the miracle of the forcing of pride's intransigence, which is no forcing but a gentle leading, can be achieved in one case (St. Paul would say, in my case), who are we to say that God cannot repeat it in all? One by one, may not each

come to the point at which he finds himself constrained to confess in Wesley's words:

> I yield, I yield, I can hold out no more;
> I sink by dying love compelled
> To own Thee conqueror!

But, it will be said, in all this there is still presupposed the real possibility that the power of self-will *could* be the stronger, even though we may admit that a universal victory of love would not in any degree imperil freedom. At the end of the process it would not be the fact that all have been saved, but that all had to be saved, which would throw doubt on the validity of what had been achieved. The knowledge that, since God is what He is, the result could not have been different, seems to cut at the very root of freedom. A very powerful love which in the end carried the day by winning all to itself—yes. But an omnipotent love which knew from the beginning that it could not but conquer—where does that leave room for the reality of decision?

Let us go back again to our human loves, and let us call to mind how it has been with each one of us. We have known what it is to be confronted by a love too strong to resist. We had no intention of yielding one whit of our proud independence. And yet we fell: it was too much for us. It forced us to a free acknowledgment of its power. And how wonderful that moment of surrender was! We felt that that was the moment for which we had been waiting in order to become ourselves: we knew then that we had been born for just such an act as this. And yet, as the weeks passed, there still seemed so much of us that was not bound over and committed, so much that we would far rather surrender to the other's keeping, but with which we could not bring ourselves to part. At intervals we felt that love overmastering us here a little, there a little more. But the process appeared so slow—and so uncertain. What ground was there for supposing that the complete surrender for which we yearned would ever be made possible to us? Supposing that other love, though so much greater than anything we could command, was simply not powerful enough ever finally to win the last fastness of our resistance and selfishness? Could we ever be certain that we should attain that

which we knew to be the purpose of our life, but which we realised equally we could never reach except we were drawn from without? What if that other power might not prove quite equal to it? Should we be faced with the prospect of life's meaning frustrated at the last great encounter? Thus we reflected. And we knew that others too, could we but penetrate their deepest anxieties, must also be standing before this possibility, looking into it and wondering.

And then we seemed to hear a voice, which told us we need have no fear. It spoke of another love, which, though we knew it not, had all the while been meeting us in that love we knew. It was this love that had really been drawing us to itself and imparting to us the sense of returning to our long home. For it was that from which we had come, and in which, all unknowing, we had been living, and which now at length had begun to reclaim us for its own. And when we heard this, we took courage and put away our fears. For then we knew. We knew this love, that it was none other but the infinite love of God. And we laughed that we had ever allowed ourselves to think that there might not be a power without us great enough to conquer those last shreds of our pride and independence. For we knew that the power of *this* love could experience no bounds at all. Sooner or later, as we let it, it would bring us back to the haven where we would be. We rejoiced to know that we could not stop it, though we could not always trust ourselves not to wish to stop it. But in the end we knew that even this desire that it should not conquer would be taken from our willing hearts. That this would be so we were fully assured, and we remembered how it was said, that " the godly consideration of predestination and our election in Christ is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort ". And with this assurance we were brought to the knowledge that with those others also, of whom we had thought before, it was in the same case. For even though they might be men who, like ourselves, thought not to know anything of the love of God, and who might meet but little love in those around them, yet we were persuaded that all of them would at last come to desire that same love as that by which we had been found. For we saw in that love, crucified for every man, a power which could not but draw all to itself, so gracious was it and insupportable for sinful men

to behold. And with this vision of the sureness of the victory of God's love, when all would freely own its sway, we returned to the world content. The knowledge that it must needs take place did nothing to disturb the certainty of our freedom. For we knew that this surrender was in no way contrary to it, but rather that in it alone could we discover our true liberty. And our assurance of it did but establish our hope, and the hope of all men, beyond the power of anything whereby we sinners might be able to prevent it.

It is in some such experience of vision as this that most of us perhaps have come, if we have come at all, to the knowledge of the strange compulsion of God's love and to the assurance that its necessary victory would not abrogate, but simply release, our freedom. I have deliberately put it in terms of a personal experience rather than in the form of an argued statement. For it is only from the point of view of the subject in actual personal relation to God and other people that these things make sense. This is simply another way of saying with Kierkegaard that " truth is subjectivity ", or with Buber that reality is found only in the *I-Thou* relationship of meeting. Directly one begins to consider the matter objectively, with the eye of the scientist or the spectator, the truth eludes one. Brunner himself has shown in his brilliant little book *The Divine-Human Encounter* what shipwreck has been made in theology by trying to express in " objective " terms what is revealed and known only to the subject-in-meeting. Freedom is essentially something that belongs to, and is only real in, the world of the *Thou*. Attempt to net it within the categories of logic and scientific thought, and it slips through the mesh. It eludes the schema of cause and effect and cannot be contained within the simple disjunction of the law of non-contradiction. Objective reason always demands: either grace or freewill (or first one and then the other), either the Divine omnipotence or the liberty of man. But a theology which is true to the personal realities it attempts to systematise must refuse this disjunction. It is bound to carry around with it the open wound of the paradox, that resolute assertion of " both-and " within the very body of the logic of non-contradiction. It must never close this wound. For the paradox is the reminder that to be true it must ever remain open to that world of freedom and decision

and personal encounter, which is the country it seeks to map and whose realities can never be contained within the co-ordinates of scientific thinking. In this *Thou* world the assertion of " both-and " sets up no tensions. However much it may puzzle and irritate the philosopher, to the subject in gracious relation to God there is no felt contradiction between what he does and what God does in him: the difficulties which arise when this activity is schematised in terms of cause and effect, of the action and reaction of forces which are equal and opposite, simply do not exist for him. Similarly, to the Christian in the personal relationship of faith to God, the knowledge that the Divine victory of love is necessary brings, not conflict and debate, but joy and peace in believing. For he sees this necessity as in no way inimical to freedom, but rather its very substantiation and assurance.

This difference of standpoints explains a puzzling characteristic that clings to all doctrines of predestination—and universalism is simply the doctrine of a single Divine decree. It is a common observation about both Calvinists and universalists that their actions do not appear to follow logically from their theories. If one is bound to go to heaven (or hell) in the end why trouble further about anything? That would seem the natural conclusion. Yet neither of these classes of men appears to be characterised by any less moral earnestness. They reveal a concern for converting and improving the world at least as serious as that of other Christians. This is usually regarded merely as a notable and inexplicable fact, though often with the insinuation that they cannot really believe what they profess.

But the divergence is not in truth so very strange. It simply marks the difference between the " subjective " and " objective " standpoints. From the point of view of objective logic, the exercise of the Divine omnipotence renders superfluous, even if it does not eliminate, any effective human action or co-operation. Looked at " objectively ", therefore, the consistent line of conduct would simply be to enjoy life and let things take their course. But to the subject in the *Thou* relation of decision, the matter looks very different. The reality and significance of human responsibility is heightened rather than diminished. The knowledge that one is the object of another human being's love, who, whatever one may do, will continue to love

and to cherish, is not the signal to seize the opportunity for careless and thoughtless living. Rather, the knowledge brings with it an overwhelming constraint to pursue precisely the opposite course.[1] It is only the man who does not really love, who looks at the matter " objectively ", to whom the " logical " course of action could possibly suggest or approve itself. So it is in our dealing with God. It is only those who do not know grace, in the sole way in which it can be known, i.e. " subjectively ", to whom the exhortation to " sin that grace may abound " can have the least plausibility. There is not the slightest need to treat seriously the objection to universalism that it is morally or spiritually debilitating. The objection rests upon a misunderstanding into which no one who makes an existential profession of the belief is in any danger of falling.[2]

For the subject in moral decision the possibility of hell is an ever-present reality. There is a dimension of seriousness which Christianity introduces into the question of existing which, as Kant once stressed, is bound up with its uncompromising dualism between heaven and *hell*, and not merely between heaven and earth. These are the two poles between which every choice has to be made. The blessed assurance of universalism, that, ultimately, hell can be an actuality for none, in no way removes its relevance for decision. Here again an objectivised logic falsifies. In human relationships, the possibility of failing a loved one, even unto the destruction of the relationship itself, always remains terribly and relevantly alive, even though one is confident that the claim of the other will always be too strong to allow one to fall away completely. In the God-relationship, where, through faith in the absolute omnipotence of the Divine

[1] Cf. *Wisdom* 15.2: " For even if we sin, we are thine, knowing thy dominion; but we shall not sin, knowing that we have been accounted thine."

[2] The XXXIX Articles clearly recognise the different effect of any doctrine of predestination upon those who are in Christ and those who are not. " As the godly consideration of Predestination, and our Election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh, and their earthly members, and drawing up their mind to high and heavenly things, as well because it doth greatly establish and confirm their faith of eternal Salvation to be enjoyed through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God: So, for curious and carnal persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God's Predestination, is a most dangerous downfall, whereby the Devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into wretchedness of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation" (Art. XVII).

love, this confidence is translated into certainty, the possibility of an ultimate denial is existentially just as real.

This is why the New Testament, while in many passages clearly universalistic in its doctrine of God, is, in others, which relate to the consequences of decision, as strongly insistent on the reality and relevance of ultimate damnation. It is futile to attempt to prove that Christ taught no belief in hell or eternal punishment, though much, it is true, may, and must, be said by way of modification. Nor is it at all necessary to a sound doctrine of universalism to establish that He did not teach it. Hell is eternally a live option. Indeed, it is only those to whom it is a live option who can possibly be saved. The valley of decision lies this side of the gates of heaven. Eternal life is only for those who have passed through this valley, " between the last blue rocks " (T. S. Eliot, *Ash Wednesday*), where acceptance and rejection are equally terrible possibilities, and who have made their choice in fear and trembling. As long as a man refuses to become a " subject ", as long as he thinks objectively and assumes that the truth of universalism relieves him of reckoning with hell or making a decision, then he is not even on the road to the valley. The state of salvation is a state of having *chosen*. If, therefore, the universalist insists on the existential seriousness of this choice, and therefore on the reality of an alternative, it is because he sees in desperate earnestness the nature of truth as subjectivity: it is not because he regards hell as an indispensable piece of bluff (Brunner, *Dogmatik*, 1,365) required to keep men moral. There could be no greater calumny than to suggest that the universalist either does not preach hell or does so with his tongue in his cheek.

There are still two ways: and the one that is crowded is still the one that leads to destruction. Many there be that find it, and that travel far along it. But at some point on that road, be it far or near, each one finds also something, or rather Someone, else. It is a figure, stooping beneath the weight of a cross. " Lord, where are you going?" asks Everyman. And the answer comes: " I am going to Rome, to Moscow, to New York, to be crucified afresh in your place." And no man in the end can bear that encounter for ever; for it is an encounter with a Power than which there can be nothing greater, a meeting with omnipotent Love itself. This love will take no man's

choice from him; for it is precisely his choice which it wants. But its will to lordship is inexhaustible and ultimately unendurable: the sinner *must* yield. God has exposed the strong right arm by which He has declared He will curb the nations. And, lo, it is pierced with nails, stained with blood, and riveted in impotence. Is it to us too an offence and foolishness? Yet this is the authentic quality of love's omnipotence. " The weakness of God is stronger than men " (1 Cor. 1.25)—than any man; for " I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself " (John 12.32). Christ, in Origen's old words, remains on the Cross as long as one sinner remains in hell. That is not a speculation: it is a statement grounded in the very necessity of God's nature. In a universe of love there can be no heaven which tolerates a chamber of horrors, no hell for any which does not at the same time make it hell for God. He cannot endure that—for *that* would be the final mockery of His nature —and He will not.

KARL BARTH ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

by The Rev. NOEL SMITH

In the second volume of his *Church Dogmatics* (1.2) Barth has a long and valuable note in which he gives us a concise summary of the views that have been held from the Fathers to the Reformers on this question of the nature of the inspiration of the Scriptures. He deals first with the Pauline passages 1 Cor. 2.6-16, and 2 Cor. 3.4-18, insisting in his exegesis on the fact that, whilst Paul no doubt knew the theories of the Talmud and the Alexandrian-Jewish school about the divine-human origin of the Torah, his assertion of a special inspiration of the Scripture is always and only in connexion with his view of the present confirmation of God of the Scripture through the work of the Holy Spirit. Barth continues:

> According to 2 Cor. 3 everything depends for him (*sc.* Paul) on that; without this work of the Spirit the Scripture is and remains veiled, however great its glory and however it may have come about. This is the case in and through the veiling of the countenance of Moses (Ex. 34) which foreshadows the reading of Scripture to-day in the Synagogue: the divinely prescribed is there, the human beings reading it are there, but over their hearts is a veil; their thinking is hardened—the open book is for them in actual fact a closed book. Only their return to the Lord could remove the veil and open up to them the way into the Scripture (p. 571).

Commenting on the section 1 Cor. 2.6-16 Barth makes the point that this " wisdom of God in a mystery " is revealed in Jesus Christ as God's revelation, not in the wisdom of men but in words through which the Spirit speaks, spirit to spirit. Carnal man can never comprehend this self revelation except that by the work of the Holy Spirit he should become truly *θεόπνευστος*. Even the " spiritual man ", the *ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος*, does not comprehend; in fact the only truly spiritual " man " is the man inspired by the Holy Spirit, he who has " the mind of Christ ", the *πνευματικὸς ἄνθρωπος*.

Barth continues (p. 573):

If one holds the two passages together, then there might result a complete picture of how the function of revelation witness has presented itself, in any case to Paul, in its nature and with its limit towards both sides. Before the secret of God and the gift of His revelation the witness stands also along with all other human beings. That this secret is unfolding itself to him, is the first point; that he can speak about it is the second point in the miracle of his existence as a witness. But once more the secret of God would have to remain secret . . . as happens to the synagogue which has and reads only the letter, and as happens to the man to whom the word of the Apostle is and remains foolishness . . . unless the same Spirit who has created this testimony as such, gives witness of its truth to the men who are its listeners and readers. This self-revelation in its totality is the *Theopneustie*, is the inspiration of the word of the Prophets and Apostles. It might be possible to view the contents of both passages as a commentary on the short statements in 2 Tim. 3.16 and 2 Peter 1.19 made about this matter—and it might be justified also to measure besides the contents of these passages what has been said later in the Church.

Barth has earlier (p. 559) referred to these two shorter passages and we can see how much importance he attaches to the concept of the " witness to God's self-revelation " through the agency of the Holy Spirit—the Biblical witness that in its turn becomes Scripture. This inspiration is in no way a mechanical miracle but rests on the relation of the Biblical witnesses to the content of their witness, since it is this content, i.e. in their sharing in the thought and words of the Holy Spirit, which has made their writings into Holy Scripture. Thus Barth accepts as decisive the proposition in 2 Tim. 3.16, *πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος*. —the whole of Scripture is quite literally " God-breathed " in the sense that the Holy Spirit inspires and actively governs it; it is then that it becomes witness to God's revelation of Himself. The fact that this connexion exists between God and Scripture emphasises the mystery of free grace. This act of the Spirit of God as present and effective in the Scripture is a decree, a fact and a decision of God Himself.

Barth then refers to certain of the second century Apologists to show how they in their views of the inspiration of Scripture concentrated on elements quite alien to those of the Scripture witnesses themselves. The first reference is to Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autolycum*, II.9: " But men of God carrying in them a Holy Spirit—*πνευματοφόροι Πνεύματος Ἁγίου*—and becoming prophets, being inspired and made wise by God, became God-taught, and holy, and righteous. Wherefore they

were also deemed worthy of receiving this reward, that they should become instruments of God—*ὄργανα θεοῦ γενόμενοι* —and contain *(χωρήσαντες)* the wisdom that is from Him, through which wisdom they uttered both what regarded the creation of the world and all other things . . . both what happened before them and what happened in their own time, and what things are now being fulfilled in our own day." The second reference is to Pseudo-Justin, *The Hortatory Address to the Greeks*, 37: " And you may easily in part learn the right religion from the ancient Sybil, who by some kind of potent inspiration teaches you, through her oracular predictions, truths which seem much akin to the teaching of the prophets." We add also the other well-known passage in chapter 8 of the same work: " For neither by nature nor human conception is it possible for men to know things so great and divine, but by the gift which then descended from above upon the holy men, who had no need of rhetorical art, nor of uttering anything in a contentious or quarrelsome manner, but to present themselves pure to the energy of the Divine Spirit, in order that the divine plectrum itself, descending from heaven, and using righteous men as an instrument like a harp or lyre, might reveal to us the knowledge of things divine and heavenly " *(ἵνα αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον ἐξ οὐρανοῦ κατιὸν πλῆκτρον ὥσπερ ὀργάνῳ κιθάρας πνὸς ἢ λύρας τοῖς δικαίοις ἄνδρασι χρώμενον . . .)*.

If the first tendency seems to involve concentration on one special point, namely on the way in which the written and spoken prophetic-apostolic word came about, the second stage exhibits the tendency, especially in the writings of Clement of Alexandria, to concentrate on the words of Scripture themselves as " holy letters " of which not one jot or tittle shall pass away. The first does not leave untouched the Biblical view of the grace and secret of the Word of God, yet its emphasis on the " how " of inspiration led to the mechanical Sibyllian oracular view, whilst the second hardens into an increasing emphasis on the literal inspiration of the words themselves. Barth's reference here is to Clement of Alexandria, *Protrepticus* IX, where Clement quotes 2 Tim. 3.15 reading " holy letters ". " For truly holy are those letters that sanctify and deify; and the writings or volumes that consist of those holy letters and syllables, the same apostle consequently calls ' all scripture

given by inspiration of God ', etc. . . . No one will be so impressed by the exhortations of any of the saints, as he is by the words of the Lord Himself, the lover of man."

A third tendency is seen in the view of Irenaeus, *Against the Heresies*, II, 28.2, where he is speaking about the interpretation of parables and other difficult places: " If, however, we cannot discover explanations of all those things in Scripture which are made the subject of investigation . . . we should leave things of that nature to God who created us, being most properly assured that the Scriptures are indeed perfect, since they were spoken by the Word of God and His Spirit; but we, inasmuch as we are inferior to, and later in existence than the Word of God and His Spirit, are on that very account destitute of the knowledge of His mysteries." If we thus leave those things which we cannot explain in the hands of God, goes on Irenaeus, " we shall both preserve our faith uninjured . . . and all Scripture, which has been given to us by God, shall be found by us perfectly consistent." We can see how this insistence on the harmony and perfection of the written words of Scripture permeates the whole of patristic apologetic and finds its culmination in Augustine's great Harmony of the Gospels. Barth instances the *Harmony*, ch. 35.54:

> Accordingly, He who sent the prophets before His own descent also despatched the apostles after His ascension. Moreover, in virtue of the man assumed by Him, He stands to all His disciples in relation of the head to the members of His body. Therefore, when those disciples have written matters which He declared and spake to them, it ought not by any means to be said that He has written nothing Himself, since the truth is that His members have accomplished only what they became acquainted with by the repeated statements of the Head. For all that He was minded to give for our perusal on the subject of His doings and sayings, He commanded to be written by those disciples, whom He thus used as if they were His own hands (*quidquid enim ille* (*Christus*) *de suis factis et dictis nos legere voluit hoc scribendum illis tamquam suis manibus imperavit*). Augustine concludes by saying that it is impossible for the evangelists ever to have written contradictory accounts; they have preserved a befitting harmony in the unity of the body itself, not only by identity in sentiment, but also by constructing records consonant with that identity.

Athenagoras, in his *Plea for Christians*, 7-9, expresses the mechanical-mantic view of Pseudo-Justin, and foreshadows the previous statement of Augustine: " But we have for witnesses of the things we apprehend and believe, prophets, men who

have pronounced concerning God and the things of God, guided by the Spirit of God . . . the prophets, who, lifted in ecstasy above the natural operations of their minds *(κατ' ἔκστασιν τῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς λογισμῶν)* by the impulses of the Divine Spirit, uttered the things with which they were inspired *(ἃ ἐνηργοῦντο)* the Spirit making use of them as a flute-player breathes into a flute." So likewise Hippolytus *De Antichristo*, 2: "For as the blessed prophets were made, so to speak, eyes for us, they foresaw through faith the mysteries of the Word. . . . For these fathers were furnished with the Spirit, and largely honoured by the Word Himself; and just as it is with instruments of music, so had they the Word always, like the plectrum, in union with them, and when moved by Him the prophets announced what God willed. For they spake not of their own power (let there be no mistake about that), neither did they declare what pleased themselves. But first of all they were endowed with wisdom by the Word, and then again were rightly instructed in the future by means of visions. And then, when thus themselves fully convinced *(πεπεισμένοι)*, they spake those things which were revealed by God to them alone, and concealed from all others." See also Augustine again in the *City of God*, XI, 4: "That God made the world, we can believe from no one more safely than from God Himself. But where have we heard Him? Nowhere more distinctly than in the Holy Scriptures, where the prophet said, 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth'. Was the prophet present when God made the heavens and the earth? No; but the wisdom of God, by whom all things were made was there, and wisdom insinuates itself into holy souls, and makes them the friends of God and His prophets, and noiselessly informs them of His works. They are taught also by the angels of God. . . ."

Barth remarks (p. 576) that this rather naïve secularisation of the whole idea of revelation meant that while the Bible was given a respected place and the Prophetic-Apostolic witness was valued highly, the Scriptures took their place within a world-view and their unique authority then stood face to face with Church tradition. The pronouncement of the Council of Trent shows clearly the end of the process: ". . . and perceiving that this truth and this discipline (*sc.* of the Gospel) are con-

tained in written books and in unwritten traditions, which were received by the Apostles from the lips of Christ himself, or, by the same Apostles, at the dictation of the Holy Spirit, and were handed on and have come down to us; . . . this Synod receives and venerates . . . all the books of both the New and the Old Testaments . . . together with the said Traditions, . . . as having been given either from the lips of Christ or by the dictation of the Holy Spirit and preserved by unbroken succession in the Catholic Church. . . ."

Another error which Barth attributes to the early Church and to later medieval formulations of the doctrine of Scripture was that the assumption was made that a formulation could be arrived at, by which the Scripture could be seen as a " visible " revelation. The prayer of Augustine—*Confessions* XI, 3.5—had been lost sight of: *Qui illi servo tuo dedisti haec dicere, da et mihi haec intelligere.* The connexion that exists between God and Scripture is not a connexion that can be formulated and " canalised " by man or by the Church; it still remains the mystery of God's free grace in His self-revelation.

With the Reformation there came a thorough restoration of the place of lordship of the Scripture in the Church, and at the same time a truer understanding of the nature of revelation. First, God speaks in the Bible clearly and unmistakably; secondly, the inspiration of the Bible is inspiration by the Holy Spirit of God; and thirdly, the Church must bend in obedience to the Bible as God's Word, its sole authority. Whilst at times an echo of the mechanical views of the Early Church is heard for example in Calvin, *Institutes* 1.7.1., and in his *Commentary* on 2 *Tim.* 3.16, yet both for Luther and Calvin the Bible is no oracle-book but the place where the witness of the revelation of God to the prophets and apostles is heard and where our hearing again of that witness in faith may through the grace of the Holy Spirit become God's Word to us.

Barth quotes Luther's *De Servo Arbitrio* where the Reformer is refuting Erasmus' gibe about the abstruseness of Scripture: " This indeed I confess, that there are many places in the Scriptures obscure and abstruse . . . which do not prevent a knowledge of all the things in the Scriptures. For what thing of more importance can remain hidden in the Scriptures, now that the seals are broken, the stone rolled from the door of the

sepulchre, and that greatest of all mysteries brought to light, Christ made man: that God is Trinity and Unity: that Christ suffered for us, and will reign to all eternity? . . . Take Christ out of the Scriptures, and what will you find remaining in them?" (Section 3). And again in the next section: "The clearness of the Scriptures is twofold; even as the obscurity is twofold also. The one is external, placed in the ministry of the word; the other internal, placed in the understanding of the heart. If you speak of the internal clearness, no man sees one iota in the Scriptures, but he that hath the Spirit of God. . . . For the Spirit is required to understand the whole of the Scripture and every part of it. If you speak of the external clearness, nothing whatever is left obscure or ambiguous; but all things that are in the Scriptures, are by the Word brought forth into the clearest light, and proclaimed to the whole world."

The particular strength of the Reformers lies in this insistence that God witnesses to Himself in His Word and in the hearts of men, cf. Calvin, *Inst.* 1.9.3: "For the Lord hath established a kind of mutual connexion between the certainty of His Word and of His Spirit; . . . God did not publish His Word to mankind for the sake of momentary ostentation, with a design to destroy or annul it immediately on the advent of the Spirit; but He afterwards sent the same Spirit, by whose agency He had dispensed His Word, to complete His work by an efficacious confirmation of that Word."

Barth concludes the note by remarking that the Reformation doctrine of Scripture is first and last a testimony to the sovereignty and the free grace of God. The proposition that the Bible is God's Word is in their view no limitation of His sovereignty but the unfolding of it in the witness of Scripture to Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, a witness through the hearing of which, by the grace of His Spirit, becomes again His Word to us.

Barth adds in a further note a masterly survey of the "hardening" of post-Reformation doctrine of Scripture, concluding with a constructive statement of his own.

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

by The Rev. R. STUART LOUDEN

Any study of the nature of the Christian Ministry must begin by affirming the necessity of the Church. The New Testament knows of no " Church-less " Christianity. Furthermore, it is not only the invisible Church that matters for the Gospel, i.e. " the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ the head ".[1] The visible Church is also vitally relevant to the Gospel, consisting of " all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children ".[2] To identify the visible Church more particularly, the *Westminster Confession of Faith* proceeds: " Unto this catholic visible Church, Christ hath given the ministry, oracles and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life, to the end of the world; and doth by His own presence and Spirit, according to His promise, make them effectual thereunto."[3]

The Ministry, then, is mentioned at the very outset of any description of the visible Church. The same standpoint is discernible in Calvin's suggested marks for recognising the true Church: " Wherever we see the word of God sincerely preached and heard, wherever we see the sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, there we cannot have any doubt that the Church of God has some existence."[4] Outside this visible mother Church, thus constituted, there is no salvation, and revolt from the Church is a denial of God and Christ.

We begin, then, from the promise that the nature of the visible Church demands a ministry to ensure the right proclamation of the Word of God, and the celebration of the sacraments as instituted by Christ. Indeed, there is a suggestion in the *Confession of Faith* that a true Ministry is one safeguard for the Church's proper life, for purity and orthodoxy are found in so far as " the doctrine of the gospel is taught and

[1] *West. Conf. Faith*, xxv, 1.
[2] op cit. xxv, 2.
[3] op cit. xxv, 3.
[4] Calvin, *Institutes* 4.1.9.

embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely ".[1]

Now the historical position of the Reformed Churches is to characterise this Ministry, demanded by the life and nature of the visible Church, as the Ministry of the Word. Calvin points out that in the Church, in which Jesus Christ is sole King and Head, there must be a ministry of the Word: " though it is right that the Lord alone should rule and reign in the Church, that He should preside and be conspicuous in it, and that its government should be exercised and administered solely by His Word; yet as He does not dwell among us in visible presence, so as to declare His will to us by His own lips, He in this uses the ministry of men, by making them, as it were, His substitutes, not by transferring His right and honour to them, but only doing His work by their lips, just as an artificer uses a tool for any purpose."[2]

In a message of " *The Superintendents, Ministers, and Commissioners of the Churches Reformed within this Realme of Scotland to all the Faithful of Scotland, 25th December,* 1565 ", we have this statement:

> The ministers of Jesus Christ have an office without comparison more excellent than that of Jewish priests and Levites, for they bring us the glad tidings of salvation, by the two-edged sworde of Goddes worde, which is mighty in operation; they slay that old man that ever fightes against God, they make his thought potent to his own confusion that the new man of God may take lyfe. They wash the soules with the bloode of Jesus Christe which abundantly drops from their lips. . . . If we think that al these things may be due without ministers or without preaching, we utterly deceyve ourselves. For the same order that God hath observed since that He hath collected His visible Church, His will shall be observed so long as it continueth upon the face of the earth.[3]

One of the main source passages in the New Testament concerning this Christian Ministry is Ephesians 4, verses 4-16, where St. Paul sets forth " that the ministry of men, which God employs in governing the Church, is a principal bond by which believers are kept together in one body. He also intimates, that the Church cannot be kept safe, unless supported by those

[1] *West Conf. Faith,* xxv, 4. [2] Calvin, *Institutes* 4.3.1.

[3] This treatment of the Old Testament by traditional Reformed theology is in marked contrast to the standpoint of *The Apostolic Ministry*, with its far-fetched interpretation of the Shaliach. See the criticism in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 195-6.

guards to which the Lord has been pleased to commit its safety."[1]

Many accept the view that the apostles, prophets and evangelists mentioned by St. Paul were temporary officers in the Church, peculiar to the apostolic and sub-apostolic ages. Pastors and teachers, however, are to be regarded as perpetual officers in the Church. The *Form of Presbyterial Church Government* (1645) lays down: " The pastor is an ordinary and perpetual officer in the Church, prophesying of the time of the gospel." The pastor is the Minister of the Word, the office with which we are presently concerned.

It is from the Holy Scriptures, " the supreme rule for faith and life ", that we must derive our authority for the institution and nature of the Christian Ministry. When that is so, the Ministry must be in line with the whole teaching of the Gospel, where the letter killeth, and the Spirit giveth life. Many will agree with Principal Story's remark that: " The value and efficacy of a ministry cannot depend on its form and method, so much as on its character and spirit. . . . The succession, which binds the life of the Church age after age into one unbroken unity, is not that of the members of an ecclesiastical order, but of these who, in virtue of their spiritual oneness with the Father, have been in their day and generation ' the friends of God '."[2] That general truth is to be remembered when we turn to more particular details.

Our Lord's calling, training and commissioning of the Apostles is the foundation of the Ministry. The Reformed Churches have always regarded the Church's Ministry as standing in the succession of the apostles. Controversies with other branches of the Church Catholic and controversies within the Reformed Church itself have arisen from divergent interpretations of what is meant by Apostolic Succession.

Calvin sees the true succession to lie in the commission to preach and to administer the sacraments. Those who rightly fulfil that commission within the visible Church are the true spiritual successors of the apostles: " When our Lord sent forth the apostles, He gave them a commission to preach the Gospel, and baptise those who believed for the remission of sins. He

[1] op cit. 4.3.2.
[2] R. H. Story, *Apostolic Ministry in the Scottish Churches*, p. 5.

had previously commanded that they should distribute the sacred symbols of His body and blood after His example. Such is the sacred, inviolable, and perpetual law, enjoined on those who succeed to the place of the apostles, —they receive a commission to preach the Gospel and administer the sacraments."[1]

There is thus a *prima facie* case against binding apostolic succession to holders of a particular office rather than to the functions of the holders. Moreover in the New Testament, it would appear that the terms, bishop, presbyter and pastor are used interchangeably. All those terms are used to signify the Minister of the Word and sacraments, the conception of the ministry which we believe to be agreeable to the Word of God. Stressing the Sole Kingship and Headship of Jesus Christ in the Church, Reformed doctrine has always emphasised the equality of ministers. The monarchical bishop, a late development of the sub-apostolic age, appears as incompatible with this principle: hence the presbyterian antipathy to prelacy.

Defending what was done at the Scottish Reformation, Principal Story writes:

> I showed you . . . that the threefold order of bishop, priest and deacon is no part of the constitution of the apostolic church; that the only two orders recognised in the New Testament are those of the elder or overseer and the deacon, that the episcopate emerged from the presbyterate, in post-apostolic times, by a natural evolution; and that the congregational episcopacy of the early Church was essentially different from the diocesan episcopacy of the medieval. Further, I pointed out that the catholicity and apostolicity of a Church could not depend on its owning a certain mode of government; but on its spirit and character, its holding the true faith, and possessing an orderly and properly authenticated ministry.[2]

What is to be said in regard to those branches of the Church Catholic who assert the episcopacy to be the *esse* and not merely the *bene esse* of the Church, and who go on to maintain an external and exclusive interpretation of apostolic succession? There is the Roman theory whose validity is dependent on tracing back an unbroken series of occupants of the Bishopric of Rome, a series going back to the Apostle St. Peter, whose commission from the lips of Jesus Christ (Matthew 16.18-19) is interpreted in a sense exclusive to Peter personally, rather than in a sense applicable to the faith which he expressed in

[1] Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.3.6.
[2] R. H. Story, op. cit. p. 238.

the body of the disciples as their spokesman. I think it can be said that the Roman theory is historically inconclusive, spiritually unsound, exegetically mistaken, and what it aims at establishing is an institution contrary to the mind or will of Jesus, namely the status of the ministry as a sacrificing priesthood. The Roman conception of the priesthood is really incompatible with the great New Testament doctrines of the Great High Priesthood of Jesus Christ and the universal priesthood of all believers, though Romanism accepts both those conceptions.

Much the same is to be said of a great deal of present day Anglican thinking, which tends to be but a pale reflection of Rome's false reasoning and Rome's mistaken conclusion. Anglican thought presents the bishops as a kind of golden chain stretching back, link by link to the apostles, and attachment to this chain authenticates the ministerial acts performed by the Church.[1]

Against any kind of formal, linear succession, whether through bishops or even through presbyters, the Reformed Church affirms the continued life of the one Body of Christ, and places the emphasis on a spiritual succession, especially in doctrine and faith. Apostolic doctrine and practice give the true basis for claiming apostolic succession. The Word of God, ever found within the living Body of Christ, is the vital link with the apostles. Continuity in the Church is secured and preserved by a Ministry of the Word, properly constituted, doctrinally sound and validly ordained.

Many would agree with Dr. Carnegie Simpson's eminently sane remarks on any form of external succession:

> For a man to stake the validity of his ministry on this succession, whether episcopal or presbyteral, is simply to give it into the region of the historically insecure. No human being can guarantee that the chain has been kept intact all through the centuries, and the possible errors and deceptions are incalculable. . . . I should be sorry indeed to base the validity of my commission as a minister of Christ's Word and Sacrament on any such historical hazard. I base it on what is certain—on, first, the vocation of Christ Himself, and on, secondly, the authorisation of the living Church, the existence of which is indisputable, and, moreover, the continuity of which from the apostolic days is beyond any historical cavil.[2]

Controversy about apostolic succession arises from divergent

[1] Cf. the general position put forward in *The Apostolic Ministry*.
[2] P. Carnegie Simpson, *Evangelical Church Catholic*, p. 156.

views of the Church. What is often called a " high " church position would often be more correctly termed a " high ecclesiasticism ", for it unduly magnifies the institutional, even the human aspects of the visible Church. A high view of the Church, as Church, insists on its status as the very Body of Christ, spiritual in character. Such a spiritual fellowship cannot be legitimised on a formal, external basis, such as the term " Apostolic succession " all too frequently implies.

The attempt to guarantee the true continuity of the one apostolic Church of Jesus Christ by an external or formal succession is an example of a frequent error in religious thought. It is an error that is found in the ideas both of Transubstantiation and verbal inspiration. By faith we are assured of the Real Presence of Christ in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood. Transubstantiation is the attempt to get an outward proof or guarantee of this truth, a truth which is to be apprehended only spiritually, that is, through vital faith. Again, faith hears the Living Word of God through the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. But human weakness wants something more " definite " and proceeds to the mistake of linking this truth to the letter of the Bible in the rigid conception of verbal inspiration. The continuity from Jesus Himself, Crucified and Risen, of His One True Living Body, the Church, is a sure apprehension of faith. A formal, outward succession mars this spiritual truth by wrongly trying to guarantee it in the material sphere.

We cannot accept as a point of departure the view that any mechanical series or succession of offices in the Church can ever establish validity of orders. Equally, I should utterly repudiate the invidious suggestion that the authority of that type of mechanically transmitted ministry is derived " from above ", while the authority of our ministry is " from beneath "—meaning by that rather scornful phrase, from the people. The Minister of the Word is the ordained officer of the Church in which Christ alone is King and Head; his Commission is from Christ; he ministers in Christ's Name and is answerable to Him, his Lord[1]. That is a truly " high " doctrine of the Church and Ministry.

[1] It is disappointing to find this misunderstanding about " from above " and " from beneath " still persisting even in such an erudite work as *The Apostolic Ministry*.

Carnegie Simpson points out: " If . . . the ministry be primarily of Christ, and the minister of Christ's appointment, then the Church's part in relation to the whole matter becomes plain. It becomes plain as regards alike what the Church can and does do in ordination, and what it cannot and does not do. The Church cannot ' make ' a man a minister of Christ. What it can do is to recognise him as one called of Christ, and, then place him in due *ordo* in the visible Church. This is ' ordination '."[1]

Our view of ordination is that by his ordination, the Scottish minister is made by Jesus Christ, the Church's Sole King and Head, a minister of the Church, catholic and universal, though his sphere of labour lies particularly within the Church of Scotland. James Moffatt, writing on the Presbyterian Churches says: " In ordaining, the Church acts by its presbyters as the catholic Church; the minister is ordained as a presbyter of the whole Church "; and he goes on to quote Principal Hill as saying: " In the same manner as everyone who is baptised becomes a member of the catholic Church, so everyone who is ordained, by the laying-on of the hands of the office-bearers of the Church, becomes a minister of the Church universal."[2]

It is worth while emphasising the catholic nature of the Ministry of the Word, the true continuance of the apostles' commission. Because the preaching office was fundamental in Christ's commission to the Apostles, it is basic for a valid ministry.[3] The Minister of the Word by virtue of his office administers the sacraments. Such ministers have authority to ordain others to the Ministry.

So far from this ministry being " from beneath ", it stands directly under Christ the King, whose direct authority is expressed in the call, vital to an understanding of the Ministry in the Reformed Churches. " No man ought to take upon him the office of a minister of the word without a lawful calling."[4] An inward, secret call of God in the heart is taken for granted, that is, " the good testimony of our heart, that we undertake the offered office neither from ambition nor avarice, nor any

[1] op cit. p. 148.
[2] J. Moffatt, *The Presbyterian Churches*, p. 116.
[3] *The Apostolic Ministry* emphasises the holder of the office rather than the function of the office.
[4] *Form of Presbyterial Church Government.*

other selfish feeling, but a sincere fear of God and desire to edify the Church ".[1] The " Call " or lawful calling is to be understood in the ecclesiastical sense of a formal call within the Church.

The Church is able to judge of the external call, and it can be laid down that no one is to be ordained until he is called in this sense. The actual form of the call, whether nomination by the people or another method of commendation to the Presbytery, is not of first importance, though nomination by the people appears to be the best method. " Ministers are legitimately called according to the Word of God, when those who may have seemed fit are elected on the consent and approbation of the people."[2]

The person thus called, the ordinand, is to be thoughtfully examined by the whole presbytery (both ministers and lay elders): " they are to proceed to enquire touching the grace of God in him, and whether he be of such holiness of life as is requisite in a minister of the gospel; and to examine him touching his learning and sufficiency, and touching the evidences of his calling to the holy ministry; and, in particular, his fair and direct calling to that place."[3] Only then is the act of ordination to be performed by the ministerial members of presbytery alone, i.e. by those who stand in the spiritual succession of the apostles as servants of the Word of God: " Every minister of the word is to be ordained by imposition of hands, and prayer, with fasting, by these preaching presbyters to whom it doth belong."[4]

The Sole Headship of Christ in the Church; the doctrinal succession to the apostles through fidelity to the Word of God; the apostolic commission to preach; the necessity for the right preaching of the Word and the administration of the two Gospel Sacraments—all these lie behind the Ministry of the Word in the Church which is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. The most important work of the Minister is that of proclamation; and according to the Larger Catechism: " The word of God is to be preached only by such as are sufficiently gifted, and also duly approved and called to that office."[5]

Fundamental in the work of the Christian ministry is the

[1] Calvin, *Institutes* 4.3.11
[2] op cit. 4.3.15.
[3] *Form of Presbyterial Church Government.*
[4] ibid.
[5] *Larger Catechism*, Q. 158.

preaching of the Word, " being the power of God unto salvation, and one of the greatest and most excellent works belonging to the ministry of the gospel ".[1] The Reformed Churches are thus committed to a " high " doctrine of preaching. The sacramental ministry is, in a sense, derived from the preaching ministry. To the ministry of the Word belongs the administration of the sacraments: " There be only two sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord in the gospel, that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord; neither of which may be dispensed by any but a minister of the word, lawfully ordained."[2]

This conception of the Ministry as the ministry of the Word has direct bearing on one practical matter, namely the preparation and training for the ministry. The tradition of the Reformed Churches is to insist on an educated ministry. The traditional presbyterian curriculum made up of a foundation in the liberal arts, followed by the study of the Word of God, with knowledge of its original tongues, and systematic doctrinal teaching—this traditional curriculum is not just a practice that has grown up by chance, but is an expression of the reformed insistence on the primacy of the Ministry of the Word. This position is tending to be lost to view even within the Reformed Church, especially among those who hold to a " social gospel ", whether of liberal or " high church " character; and thus any case for reform of the theological curriculum is being pre-judged. The present plea for more practical and devotional training (sound as some of the suggestions are) fails to recognise that the primary purpose of a theological curriculum in the Reformed Church is to equip a minister to preach, to train him as a Minister of the Word. I think this is an issue which should be faced at once, because of a growing willingness to jettison any kind of academic discipline in the desire to encourage candidates for the Ministry. Sincerity, organising ability, sociability and zeal may all be necessary qualities for the Ministry in the twentieth century, but can any one of these be regarded as a substitute for a careful and thorough equipping of men as servants of the Word? I think not, Preaching is the most important work of the Ministry.

Another practical matter which points to a certain amount

[1] *Directory for the Public Worship of God.* [2] *West. Conf. Faith*, XXVII, 4.

of confused thinking among us to-day, is the way in which we rightly insist on the sacraments being dispensed by none but ordained ministers of the Word, while at the same time we are willing to admit almost any person into our pulpits to preach the Word of God, or, more correctly, to occupy the period of worship set apart for the sermon. Yet preaching is really the spoken sacrament. Moreover, it is as a Minister of the Word that a pastor is ordained, and the sacramental ministry is, in theory, derived from the Ministry of the Word. Our lax standpoint is a departure from the original reformed insistence that the message preached be always the Word of God. Note what the *Larger Catechism* has to say about how the word of God is to be preached by those that are called thereunto: " They that are called to labour in the ministry of the Word, are to preach sound doctrine, diligently, in season and out of season, plainly, not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; faithfully, making known the whole counsel of God; wisely, applying themselves to the necessities and capacities of the hearers; zealously, with fervent love to God and the souls of his people; sincerely aiming at his glory and their conversion, edification, and salvation."[1] Perhaps there would be a greater authority and efficacy in the Church's proclamation if we adhered to a " higher " doctrine of the preaching of the Word.

The view expressed here may seem to elevate the Ministry unduly: " New presbyter is but old priest writ large!" It is sometimes objected that much harm has been done in Scotland by placing the minister on a pedestal! That is a misapprehension. It is the office and the message which are elevated and revered in this proper conception of the Ministry—not the holder of the office or the human spokesman. Reformed thinking has always had such a noble conception of the greatness of the message that it has rejected the Roman idea of the priest's intention being able to direct the grace of the Gospel whither he will; and also rejected the suggestion that a minister's personal unworthiness can invalidate the message he proclaims or the efficacy of the sacraments he dispenses. Not the Minister, but the Ministry of the Word is given a place of honour.

It is this Ministry of the Word that Jesus Christ, her Sole

[1] *Larger Catechism*, Q. 159.

King and Head, has given to His own Church. So, since the days of the apostles, the Word of God has been effectively proclaimed in judgment and in comfort to the world and to the Church.

Postscript

The appearance of *The Apostolic Ministry*, the scholarly volume prepared under the direction of Dr. Kenneth E. Kirk, has made the nature of the Ministry an even more burning issue in the churches to-day. The standpoint of the above article is opposed to the general position of that impressive Anglican compilation, but its writer believes that the Reformed position has better support from Holy Scripture.

The reader's attention is also directed to a small but most impressive volume by Professor T. W. Manson, D.D., of Manchester, entitled *The Church's Ministry* (London, June 1948),[1] in which the author deals with what he regards as some of the fallacies of *The Apostolic Ministry*. Professor Manson bases his position on a careful study of the scriptural conception of the Body of Christ, which leads him to the conclusion that " there is only one ' essential ministry ' in the Church, the perpetual ministry of the Risen and Ever-present Lord Himself "; and that " all other ministries are derivative, dependent, and functional ". The fundamental element in the apostolate is proclamation (*kerygma*), and thus the ministry is the Ministry of the Word. " The Church is the Body of Christ and the continuation of the Incarnation or, as I should prefer to express it, the Church's Ministry is a continuation of the Messianic Ministry of Jesus."

[1] Reviewed *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 2, No. 1.

THE WITNESS OF THE LAITY

by The Rev. Professor G. D. HENDERSON

The distinction between clerical and lay appeared early in the history of the Church as a natural influence of pagan and Jewish practice, and is assumed by Clement of Rome, who, however, makes an important point when he treats the laity as an order: "to the high priest his proper ministrations are allotted, and to the priests the proper place has been allotted, and on levites their proper services have been imposed; the layman is bound by the ordinances for the laity." In course of time the gulf widened between clergy and laity and the laity degenerated into mere spectators, the liturgy being in the hands of the clergy. The distinction is sufficiently plain in Tertullian and Origen. The conception of *opus operatum*, though not intended to exclude the co-operation either of the celebrant or of the receiver, had the practical effect of setting the people a great distance away; and lay communion in one kind, though this was not its motive, seemed to symbolise the separation.

At the Reformation such cleavage between ministers and laymen was one of the features commonly treated as abuses. John Hus had made his protest. Luther's teaching on the priesthood of all believers, the liberty of the Christian man, the merely functional difference between clergy and people, was in line with the contemporary individualism to which the Church had to adapt itself, as to-day it is called upon by an opposite emphasis to re-adapt itself in its doctrine of the Church to the new community spirit. Even, however, in radical Protestantism only extremists wished to abandon the distinction entirely. R. C. Walton in his recent *Gathered Community* states the Baptist position thus: "We do not believe that our ministers have a special sacramental status which enables them alone to preach the Word and administer valid sacraments, but we do say of a minister, as we do not say of a layman, that he has been called by God to the work of the Christian ministry, and has been set apart and given authority to exercise his ministry."

The Reformation generally gave to the layman a new sense of personal responsibility before God for himself and society,

allowed him a larger direct share in worship through vernacular services and congregational singing; supplied him with the Bible and with the elements of the education required for reading it and for grasping the exposition of it from the pulpit, and encouraged family worship where " the priest-like father reads the sacred page ". The time was past

> When want of learning kept the laymen low
> And none but priests were authorised to know.

The Churches have varied in the extent to which authority has been entrusted to laymen. The Church of England (like the Church of Rome and the Eastern Orthodox Churches) remains conservative on this point, having a sacramental view of ordination, being in Bishop Ken's words " governed by pastors commissioned by Thee and endowed with the power of the keys ", and having only under recent pressure committed itself even to such a step as the creation of the Church Assembly. Presbyterianism was regarded by James I as dangerously democratic. The Eldership brought to laymen a large measure of local control in the administration of spiritual affairs and supervision of public morality, education and charity, and also equality with ministers in numbers and rights of speaking and voting even on doctrinal subjects in Presbyteries, Synods and General Assemblies. A layman has lately acted as Moderator in one of the American Presbyterian Churches, though this, while not a unique incident, is a very unusual proceeding. In the Hungarian Reformed Church courts of the Church are presided over jointly by a minister and an elder. With Congregationalists, Baptists and others even the administration of the sacraments might be in lay hands. In some cases the minister is a mere employee of the congregation, policy being controlled by laymen. The Methodist Churches have a great army of lay preachers. Quakers reject " the idea of a priestly caste ", but insist that " in the service of the kingdom the work of the ministry has an essential place ".

But " Laicism " is really equivalent to secularism, and most Churches would agree that the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers does not prohibit the setting apart of persons for ministerial duty, and the vast majority of Christian people support a professional ministry and hold their ministers as a class and as individuals in high respect, if not in awe. Much has been

written in praise of the clergy, as by Chaucer, Fielding, Goldsmith and a multitude of biographers; and there have been many epoch-makers among them, Fathers, Scholastics, Saints, Reformers, Cranmer, Laud, Wesley, and so many more.

On the other hand there has been a persistent distaste for clericalism. Laymen have been notoriously critical of the clergy for moral failure, weakness of leadership, inefficiency, professional hypocrisy, sanctimoniousness and smugness, Caesaropapism and general interference, the irrelevance of preaching, the formalism of worship, big- and little-endianism in theological and ecclesiastical controversy, pedantic and pulpit language, want of enterprise, the ignorance and ineffectiveness and lack of a sense of proportion that result from segregation, and much else. Spiritual guidance is thought either too narrow and dogmatic or too vague and unauthoritative. Sarcasm has been lavished on many types from the hunting squire to the tub-thumping revivalist, from Alexander VI and Richelieu to Bishop Blougram and Mr. Chadband and Gideon Planish, and by none has the attack been made more devastatingly than by Kierkegaard. Criticism has often been simply malicious, but it has just as often expressed the anxieties of earnest Christians.

The laity may perhaps be said to get the clergy they deserve; but on the other hand the clergy have tended to monopolise religious activity to an undue extent and to do people's religion for them. Laymen have, of course, contributed enormously to the advance of the Christian cause and rendered invaluable service in many connexions, Constantine and Charlemagne, William the Silent, Cromwell, Masaryk; Howard, Shaftesbury, Wilberforce; Dante, Milton, Francis Thomson; Melanchthon, Tolstoi, Berdyaev; Grotius, Pascal, von Hügel; Philip de Mornay, Johnston of Warriston, William Bradford, Robert Nelson, Robert Raikes; an endless catalogue of religious leaders and representatives, prophets and saints, on a small scale or a greater; the English church-warden, the Presbyterian elder, the Methodist class-leader, " the Men " in the Scottish Highlands, the Deacon in an American village, the native catechist in India or Africa. In all the persecutions, ancient and modern, the majority of sufferers have been laymen.

Yet ministers are justified in feeling that generally speaking too much is left to them and not enough initiative and labour

can be credited to laymen. The Councils of the early Church were clerical: Councils have still too much of that character. Even Amsterdam was largely an affair of clergy. If Christian principle and the Christian way of life are to be vindicated and are to maintain and extend their influence and authority, all the resources of the Churches will have to be made available. There is an obvious task for clergy, both those of creative capacity and those of routine reliability; but there is much that clergy cannot do by themselves, much that they ought not to have to do, much that they cannot do at all, or cannot do so effectively as can the right kind of layman properly trained. Laymen must more fully realise that except for an extremely small percentage represented by the ministers, they constitute the Church; and they should be more conscious of their place as an order and realise their special "liturgy" in our modern world.

It is true that notions about the segregation of the clergy have sometimes been exaggerated. Every trade and profession is segregated. What does the chartered accountant or the chemist or the teacher know of the mentality and problems and outlook of the fisherman or the miner or the draper's assistant that may not be within the cognisance of the minister? Most people's acquaintance with their fellows is narrowly limited to a few types, and most people see selected and perhaps not always characteristic aspects of the behaviour and opinions of those with whom they come into contact in business or in leisure hours. One does not necessarily *know* a man through having heard him swear or seen him in a public house as a minister may not have done. A minister's reading, both solid and light, and his experience of other people and of himself, may well make him a shrewd observer of human nature and judge of character; and if he has the gift of sympathy and uses his opportunities he will learn a great deal: we are told how Archbishop William Temple benefited by becoming acquainted with certain otherwise unknown types through his connexion with the W.E.A. Ministers have the same access as others to that modern revealer of humanity, the cinema. Every minister, too, will have seen something at home, at school and in the world before his special segregation began. Unworldliness does not inevitably imply ignorance of the world.

On the other hand it is true that people seem to disguise

themselves more completely in a minister's company than in any other, while it is at the same time more important that he should understand those with whom he has to do and be able to reach their real selves than that a farmer should appreciate the inner workings of a bus driver's mind or that a tailor should know more about a customer than the extent of his credit. In choosing a railway compartment people avoid a clerical collar as they do an infant that may squall; and for non-churchgoers a minister's vocabulary even in ordinary conversation may often be non-conducting or at least puzzling. Adam Smith speaks of the grave, austere and abstracted severity which he thought appropriate in a clergyman, and says that a man should look like his profession; but he adds: " The pedantry of every profession is disagreeable ". The minister cannot but be a professional with a professional bias and a professional manner. He is a kind of walking conscience that embarrasses people. The world is on its guard against him as a secret agent. If he talks religion, it is merely his job; and if he does not, then there must be some ulterior motive.

Men will take it, however, from a layman. How many have read C. S. Lewis or Dorothy Sayers who would never dream of opening a book by a professional theologian, however journalistic his style! A butcher may invite a house-painter to his pew in church without creating suspicion, and one scavenger may make it clear to another that he thinks gambling silly, just in the same way as he can make it plain that he is no Communist or that he likes Gilbert and Sullivan. Christianity with the layman can be an element in all his contacts without the suggestion that he is a paid censor or an officer of the law.

It is also true that the experience of a layman may make him more practical than a man who must spend part of every day among books. In connexion with the Diet of Augsburg of 1547, Charles V formed a committee of statesmen and theologians to face the religious situation, and his biographer tells us: " The introduction of the laity was a new feature; it was hoped that the princes would give a wide berth to the theological rocks on which former compromises had split, and make rather for the reform of practical abuses." The layman may also see things in different perspective. An early eighteenth century defender of Presbyterian discipline wrote:

> Ministers . . . are apt to have too much keenness in their spirits and to express too much rigour in their actings. But ruling elders are more conversant in the world, know better what the times will bear, and what allowances are necessary to be made in this or that case. Now when the people (in the case of scandals) see themselves judged by such persons, and that there is no other discipline exercised on 'em but what even their own neighbours, as well as their ministers, think reasonable, they can have no just cause of complaint.

It must be admitted that laymen frequently botch their job as Christian witnesses. Many, indeed, never think of witnessing in any shape or form. They are connected with a church for self-centred reasons; want attention rather than work; have to be petted and visited and accorded votes of thanks; and keep their minister employed in such completely unprofitable drudgery amongst respectable people when he ought mainly to be employed and actively supported or " prevented " in enterprising work amongst persons who do not pay his stipend and expect their money's worth in return. They need Calvin's reminder that " it certainly is the part of a Christian man to ascend higher than merely to seek and secure the salvation of his own soul ". Said the Scottish Archbishop Robert Leighton: " Every Christian soul is personally engaged first to be enlightened, and then to shine."

But even consecrated laymen may talk too much about religion or annoy people with impertinent enquiries, or show themselves narrow or self-righteous. Men about church, too, are often nice and harmless men, rather than men of weight and personality. And in some cases attendance at church meetings has become a disease, or else may be a mere hobby like collecting butterflies or cultivating begonias. As Dr. John Marsh has written: " We must cease from judging a church member, good or bad, by the number of evenings he spends on church premises doing church work, and instead come to estimate his work in terms of the Christian impact he is making in secular society."

Clergy are sometimes criticised as behind the times; but it is very often laymen who are so conservative if some small alteration in worship or organisation is suggested by way of adaptation to changing times. Winslow's study of Jonathan Edwards mentions trouble over congregational singing. " By the Old Way each male worshipper sang without reference to

the time and pitch of all the others. The women remained silent. By the New Way, or Singing by Rule, the entire congregation arrived at the same point in the hymn at approximately the same time and in approximately the same key. On this issue almost every parish in the land had been locked in more or less deadly strife at some time during the 1720's." In Scotland when William Robertson Smith was tried for heresy, it was the lay vote that led to his condemnation; the forward look and the concern for essentials were with the ministers. When to-day a union of congregations is proposed on grounds of economy and commonsense, progress is not infrequently held up by intransigent laymen for petty sentimental reasons. Some absurd " secessions " have been due to short-sighted laymen, as when a Scottish congregation was split because it was proposed to drop the " reading of the line " in the Psalms, a custom which the schools had rendered meaningless. All the churches have no doubt broadened their outlook in line with general development, but there is still obvious need for a widening process of education before the laity will be able fully to exercise the evangelistic influence which should be theirs.

One may doubt whether satisfactory attention is paid to the training of laymen for Christian witness. Said Dr. Samuel Johnson: " Our religion is in a book; we have an order of men whose duty it is to teach it; we have one day in the week set apart for it . . . yet ask the first ten gross men you meet, and hear what they can tell of their religion." It is only too true. Is there sufficient instruction in connexion with religion? Do people understand why certain things are done in church, or indeed what it is all about? At one time the dominance of the conception of orthodoxy made truth seem a simple system concentrated in the Heidelberg Catechism or some other. King James I said that in his day every one who had had a mother thought he could write a catechism; it was as plain as that. The Scot of the eighteenth century knew the scheme of salvation and listened critically for its unfolding in the pulpit Sunday by Sunday, whatever the text might be. He had no difficulty in giving a reason for the faith that was in him. Now it is different. The would-be Christian world is like Charles Lamb who was determined that his children would be brought up in

their father's religion—" if they can find out what it is". Truth will not fit into the old pigeon-holes, nor any pigeon-holes. Perhaps Calvin expected too much of the intellect of the ordinary layman; but he never thought of private judgment apart from Word and Spirit, and has much to say against mere speculation. To-day the emphasis in education is on self-expression, and so we have discussion groups talking glibly about subjects which they have not studied, and having outgrown the old memory methods we are left with a generation that seems almost completely ignorant of the contents of the Bible. Most church people do not know the history of their own denomination, or what in particular it stands for. People also seem to have grown up without instruction in private prayer so that as adults they can do no better than when they were little children. And there are so many urgent problems facing Christians to-day with regard to world politics, social questions, war, business ethics, marriage and divorce, Communism, the sub-Christian sects, secularist philosophies, about which people read in the newspapers (print being still a popular idol), but about the Christian attitude to which they seem to have little guidance. Protestantism helped to free men to think, and fought hard against ignorance and superstition; the duty remains to see that people have the necessary aids to enable them, if so disposed, usefully to apply their minds to the problems of the day. There must be many people who feel quite lost and are unhappy about their helplessness. In the circumstances the escapist methods of Rome and of Fundamentalism have their attraction. And even those who have themselves been well taught require instruction in method in order that they may be able to pass on what they know.

In this connexion one must rejoice in efforts such as are being made at Bossey in Switzerland and under Kerk en Wereld in Holland definitely to train laymen for Christian witness. Presbyterian conferences at Montreal, and similar centres in U.S.A., seek to meet the same need. The Church of England has tutorials, the Methodists have correspondence classes, Scotland has the Iona Community, Bristol Baptist College is experimenting in training courses, nor may one overlook laymen's movements such as the long-established Y.M.C.A. and the Student Christian Movement. There is also Catholic Action.

And one of the hopeful things at Amsterdam was the recognition of the importance of all this kind of thing and of the pressing need for its sound and systematic development.

One difficulty in the way of effective lay witness may be noted. In Baghdad one has no trouble in realising that one is in a Moslem city; in Nasik that one is at a Hindu pilgrim centre. As for Western Europe, Christianity has been here a long time and has made its mark. The mark is much deeper than is easily appreciated. In a sense, therefore, the Church has done its work. Even its enemies tend to speak its language. But one result is that for the ordinary person brought up in an ordinary congregation, there is simply no thrill. If one were in constant danger of martyrdom; if one had been a swineherd like the prodigal; if one were in the position of emerging from the dungeon of paganism; if like Justin one could discover the Bible and amazedly find there for oneself " the only sure and valuable philosophy ", then there would be something to be excited about. Said R. L. Stevenson: " If God sent round a drum before the hawthorns came in flower, what a work should we not make about their beauty "; and Kierkegaard suggests that if people had to pay something for permission to pray, there might be quite a run on it. But " the old, old story " may not readily stir enthusiasm and provide inspiration and call forth latent capacity for sacrifice, and even a conversion experience may be stereotyped and according to plan. No one can do a first-class work with blunt instruments. Even training will not suffice.

H. A. L. Fisher in his *History of Europe* notes that Goethe was present at the Battle of Valmy in 1792 and pronounced it epoch-making, and he comments that the new France " had captured the real secret of power, which is never a function of mechanism, but always an ardour of the soul ". Efficiency had been with the Prussians, but efficiency was not enough. Ardour of the soul is a prerequisite to helpful learning. President John A. Mackay insists upon something of the same sort when he reminds us that " a profitable and scientific study of the Bible must be preceded by a spiritual encounter with the God of the Bible ". The layman who is to lead needs " ardour of the soul ", and ardour is not born in a rut.

From this we must descend to some prosaic details. There

is a wide field of important duty open theoretically and in general for the layman as a Christian witness, but Churches do not always take pains to make actual service practicable for the individual, and so to employ the resources that exist. In Scotland, for example, elders have a very honourable place assigned them in the governing bodies of the Church, and at times and on occasion they have played a vital part as for instance in connexion with the Disruption of 1843. But to-day the co-operation of many is rendered impossible because in so many cases Presbytery and committee meetings are held at hours which are only suitable for laymen who have retired from business. The average age of those available is consequently high; their vote is generally for the *status quo*; and the so-called "representative elder" is far from being truly representative of the religious manhood of his congregation. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, too, meets annually for a period of ten days and no provision is made to enable most classes of churchmen to absent themselves from their regular work in order to attend. These are illustrations of how even the strongest features of a system can be rendered of no avail. Other churches have corresponding problems. It is quite essential that truly representative laymen, of different ages and classes and types, should have opportunity open to them, should betimes be initiated into duties for which they have the capacity, should be trusted and encouraged so that the Church may come to have some priority amongst their interests, should have possibilities of service brought to their notice and should have their Christian responsibilities set before them in definite and concrete forms.

Time is, of course, a most serious difficulty. Many able and active younger members of the Church simply cannot find time such as would be required for church work, committees, visitation and study. The kind of man whom the Church needs will be the very man who takes his daily work seriously and throws himself into it so that when evening comes he is tired, requires light relaxation, is little inclined to read books on worrying problems, and would not be at his best in grasp or initiative if he did turn to Church business. Modern committee work in connexion with any organisation occupies a great deal of time and energy. Those who might make the best church

leaders will also be those most sought after for their assistance and advice in other important spheres such as local politics or social welfare. The total number of persons with outstanding gifts in any community is limited, and the demands upon them are extremely heavy. At Amsterdam there was a general feeling that there ought to be more laymen on the Central Committee but the men were not to be found; the Churches had not trained them and put them forward; they were all busy leading other important concerns; they were simply not available in anything like adequate numbers. Another movement is therefore being left to the clergy, and Church Unity " that the world may believe " becomes merely one of a multitude of peripheral concerns for those very people without whose enthusiastic co-operation it cannot possibly be achieved.

It should further be remarked that all or nearly all that has been said about the laity in general applies to the women of the Church, a very large and interested section of the laity, constituting a treasury of spiritual resources of which none of the Churches is making full use while some neglect them in the most short-sighted and obscurantist and culpable manner. Women to-day are both free and able to an extent never before approached. The new resources thus made available are a characteristic of our time just as are the new problems, and commonsense should so correlate these.

For the mass of laymen, naturally, there will be no question of leadership. They have perhaps not the ability, the personality, the initiative. But they can be faithful stewards; and one of the most clamant needs is for ordinary church members to realise how wonderfully they can further the cause of Christ in the course of their ordinary occupation. Here we have a matter which has been most helpfully emphasised by the Christian Frontier movement of Dr. J. H. Oldham. " One of the main preoccupations of the Christian News-Letter has been with the work and witness of the Christian in his secular calling." This does not even suggest that service of our fellows can exhaust the meaning of religion. But it does rule out a Pascal-like attempt to live in two worlds at once, or an extreme individualistic otherworldliness of a quietist type or such escapist programmes as we find in the Millennarian sects. There may be times as in the early days of the Church, and as perhaps

in certain parts of Europe to-day, where the possibility of a Christian civilisation does not arise and where the Christian has no choice but to isolate himself as much as possible. One might have to choose between theocracy and technocracy. But this is emergency procedure. The other extreme of forming a Christian political party, like the former German Zentrum or the Dutch followers of Abraham Kuyper, is likewise to be avoided; it inevitably confuses the issue. A more subtle temptation is to identify our civilisation with our religion, our culture or class prejudices with the Kingdom of God; and the danger is none the less because this is so often done in complete innocence.

Service in and through ordinary avocation is what is needed, not merely finding time for prayer at our work, but rather developing what Erasmus called " a certain craft of virtuous living ", or what St. Francis of Sales had in mind when he said that " there are particular commandments for each according to his vocation " and if he does not keep these it will not serve even should he raise the dead. St. Francis of Assisi saw a place for Christians living in the world though he did not choose it for himself; and is this not also the message of the *Bhagavad Gita* as of what we read in *Piers Plowman*:

> In the apparel of a poor man
> And in a pilgrim's likeness
> Many times God has been met
> Among needy people.

Principal John Caird, in a sermon which profoundly impressed Queen Victoria, urged the blending of religion with the business of common life. Thomas Carlyle has written: " The prayer which accomplished itself in special chapels at stated hours, and went not with a man, rising up from all his Work and Action, at all moments sanctifying the same—what was it ever good for?" Luther's doctrine of the priesthood of all believers hallows the home, and the factory and the office. Therefore we think of parents in the home; doctors, not preaching, but being Christian doctors; employers or employees who act both in crises and in the midst of routine as responsible followers of Jesus Christ. One may not be in a position to teach in Sunday School or sing in a Choir or speak at meetings or contribute much to collections; but one can strive to live like a Christian

and grow in the knowledge of what it means to be a Christian, not a Pharisee, self-righteous and self-conscious, wearing his soul in his buttonhole, but a genuine representative with a certain subtle fragrance about one's character of which those around cannot but become aware.

There will always be the problem of the nominal Christian. It is the universal question of the few and the many: one does not look for millions of Shakespeares and St. Augustines. But without neglecting intensive culture it is always possible to extend a little further the boundaries of cultivated territory. Certainly the future of the world depends upon the measure in which professing Christians can be strengthened in a sense of responsibility and self-dedication, and brought to accept the challenge of our Lord when He asked His disciples whether they could drink of the cup which He drank when He gave Himself for the sins of the world, and to take advantage of every means of fitting themselves for their obligations alike in power, strategy and tactics, alike in inspiration, aim and method.

It must not be left to ministers. Zwingli came across a statement in a commentary that something important took place by virtue of the authority of Peter and James, and he added in the margin " and that of the whole congregation ". Such emphasis upon lay witness and responsibility is of the utmost urgency and importance, not only in connexion with actual Church affairs, but in connexion with the maintenance and promotion of true religion and a good life everywhere and the achievement of a Christian world.

PREACHING FORGIVENESS TO THE HINDU

by The Rev. WILLIAM STEWART

Some years ago, on Christmas Eve, I was invited to explain the significance of Christmas to a group of Hindu students in one of the Institutions at Sevagram (Mr. Gandhi's *Ashram*). In the discussion which followed the address, the thoughtful Principal of this Institution said something like this: " Would it not be correct to say that the real difference between you Christians and ourselves is that you teach that forgiveness is possible, while we believe it is impossible and the idea immoral?"

The Hindu basis for a statement like this is in the fundamental importance of the doctrine of *Karma*. This teaches that the consequence of all our actions, good and bad, must inevitably be worked out to the uttermost by the individual soul. Superficially this doctrine coincides with that of the Scriptural word: " Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap " (Gal. 6.7), but, for the reaping, the Hindu postulates an indefinite succession of rebirths. The orthodox conviction is that there is no power in heaven or on earth which can interfere with the working of this law, for the gods themselves are as subject to it as man.

Obviously there is a sternness about this doctrine which may inculcate a high standard of conduct. There is a fear of consequences which like " the hangman's whip " might " keep the wretch in order ". For people dominated by this conception—and it is difficult to exaggerate how deeply it is held by practically all Hindus—it is easy to understand that the Christian message of forgiveness, imperfectly understood, might seem to open the door to all kinds of irresponsibility. If forgiveness is possible, is not sin less important? Will this not encourage a man to continue in his ways in the jaunty confidence that he will be let off? The antinomianism which has dogged the word of forgiveness since the days of St. Paul rears its head, and the facile word, *Dieu pardonnera; c'est son métier* is just round the corner.

Unfortunately there are enough Christians who share this superficial conception of forgiveness to lend colour to the suspicions of the Hindu. I remember the dismay with which on one occasion I heard a man who had been guilty of apostasy arrogantly claim his *right* to be immediately readmitted to the Christian fold by defiantly hurling the story of the Prodigal at the heads of those concerned with the problem. That parable is quoted in this sense all too frequently, with no recognition whatever of the penitence of the Prodigal and what it implied, but only with a demand that "letting off" should be immediate and automatic. This sort of thing justifies the suggestion that the very idea of forgiveness is immoral.

When we consider this matter from the angle both of the Hindu and of the Christian claiming cheap forgiveness, the root of the trouble seems to be an objective, quantitative conception of sin and righteousness. According to the *Karma* theory, righteousness is very definitely a kind of objective possession of the individual. It is a credit balance, while sin to be expiated is a debit balance. The Hindu may not have a "recording angel" but he has a universe which keeps accurate accounts and will never tamper with the totals! Each man inevitably carries his record with him. If the balance is on the right side, it carries with it rights; if on the wrong side, then the debt must be paid. Righteousness is thus essentially a possession, essentially individual. The thought that it is fundamentally a matter of a relationship with a personal God is, accordingly, utterly foreign to this conception.

That this should be an inevitable aspect of Hindu belief is not surprising when we remember that for the Hindu the Supreme Being, God Himself, is the Absolute without attributes, entirely aloof from man's affairs. Clearly there can be no personal relations with such a God. There are indeed, also, the gods of popular devotion who do care for man, but they cannot interfere with the law of *Karma*. They, too, are as subject to it as man himself. For all practical purposes, therefore, the Hindu sees on the throne of the Universe not a living God but an impersonal, inexorable law which heaven and earth must obey.

But though the Christian has shaken himself free from this conception, in the superficial understanding of forgiveness he

often has not really gained any deeper understanding of the nature of righteousness. It is still a *possession* of the individual, even if he receives it as a gift. He sees God on the throne indeed, but an easy-going God who is primarily the Keeper of the gate of heaven, and who—so the Christian is assured—is willing to open it more easily than is known to those who know only the law of *Karma*. But this does not involve any truly personal relationship or encounter any more than does the view it would displace. It does not involve that kind of personal help which breaks the solitude of the self-centred soul. The Hindu who has paid his score can claim his due. The Christian receives his reward by the favour of God, but he is still unchanged, still self-centred, receiving for himself a gift.

From this analysis it would appear that the Hindu really has, as he thinks, a more serious view of sin and its consequence than the Christian has. This appearance is the more justified when we recognise that for the Hindu the way to final deliverance is enormously long and hard, involving, even for the saintly, an almost infinite succession of rebirths, a purification of the soul which stretches beyond the imagination of man. Yet in actual practice the result is not a more lofty moral standard for the Hindu—rather the reverse.

There is, first, in popular Hinduism, and even among some devout adherents of this religion, a quite disconcerting superficiality in the conception of what sin is. There is a frequent recognition that the infringement of ritual rules, rules of caste or of ceremonial purifications is much more serious than moral failing. The neglect of the weightier matters of the law may be accompanied by a meticulous tithing of mint and anise and cummin. In consequence the " works of righteousness " which provide the necessary antidote to sin are frequently equally external and superficial. I have watched a man industriously circle a shrine the requisite number of times, with the appropriate gestures and the correct formula, who could interrupt his devotions with such shouted remarks as revealed that his preoccupation all the time had been with a quarrel or with schemes to outwit a business rival. The perfunctoriness of the performance of religious rites at centres of pilgrimage, and the surrounding atmosphere of revelry are really startling when seen for the first time by a person brought up in the Christian tradition which

links so closely the conceptions of piety and morality. Certainly India has many examples of much more exacting works of piety entered upon with real devotion. There are pilgrimages which involve immense privations, acts of endurance which strike awe into the beholder, progression to holy places which may involve rolling along the road for hundreds of miles. These reflect a serious realisation of the costliness of sin and redemption. Yet even the most exacting still imply a conception of sin and righteousness which is superficial—sin is something which clings but which does not belong to the man in his inmost self, and righteousness as it is gained is a possession. Though it takes a million rebirths, the individual is finally capable of setting things right for himself. His evil *Karma* is his own affair, but the cure is in his own power. Surely this means, not only for the ordinary man with his preposterously superficial acts of merit, but even for the most ascetic devotee, that he has not yet recognised the gravity of sin: " Thou hast not yet considered how weighty a thing sin is " (*nondum considerasti quanti ponderis sit peccatum*). There is no recognition of the deep truth in the Lord's warning word: " When ye have done all the things that are commanded you say, we are unprofitable servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do " (Luke 17.10).

In the second place, all kinds of actions, whether meritorious or not, are apt to be twisted into a form of self-seeking. Almsgiving is a recognised act of merit, and the army of beggars still holding out supplicating hands never cease to urge this on their benefactors. The coin which is thrown in response represents no kind of real pity or personal concern, but does represent an act which counts on the credit side of the record for the giver. This fact lies behind the quite extraordinary difficulty which meets reformers trying to win public support for constructive work for beggars. That such work is obviously more likely to give permanent moral and material help to the unfortunate than casual help by the wayside, does not weigh with that large section of the public which is frankly not interested in the well-being of others, but is still glad to have the opportunity of acquiring merit by the giving of alms. The wide recognition of this attitude was illustrated by a notice I saw prominently displayed at the counters of the General Post Office of a Provincial capital: " Extend to others the courtesy

you require: it costs you nothing and may earn you much merit." Here we have illustrated the sheer individualism of the principle, and here too is further light on the contention of the last paragraph that the conception of sin and its cure is fantastically cheap. In consequence of this common attitude, the obviously self-sacrificing labours of some Christians, especially those engaged in work like the service of lepers, is explained away by a section of the Hindu public as a method of acquiring merit. It is thus thought to be as completely self-regarding as the privations of the man rolling his way to a shrine.

The deepest failure of all in the thorough-going doctrine of *Karma* is its quite radical individualism, which ultimately denies the capacity of any person either to help or harm another. (We are not here concerned to develop the obvious other criticism that there can be no real ethical value in expiation of sins of a previous life of which we can have no recollection.) The trouble with that conception of sin which says that whatever we may have done, ultimately we shall ourselves discharge our debt—excluding on principle both the possibility and the necessity of grace—is that, apart from other things, it ignores the terrible fact that our sin involves others, infecting them both with sin and suffering. I knew a boy who, in a fit of anger, hurled a stone which destroyed one of his sister's eyes. There is something utterly unsatisfying in the suggestion that a person guilty of such an act should feel able ultimately to pay fully for it. In his penitence he himself realises profoundly that he has destroyed something which cannot be repaired, and has created a situation which can be healed not by himself alone. On the other hand, the logical rigidity of the law of *Karma* is denied every day by the ordinary facts of family life—the self-giving of a mother for her children, the benefits both physical and moral which a parent may either impart or deny to his family. The logic of the *Karma* doctrine must interpret the kindly act as just one more bit of personal acquiring of merit, the benefit received being just one part of the reward of virtue in a previous life. The violence of the boy with the stone is just one more black mark on his record, which may mean his reincarnation in a lower animal; but the suffering of the unhappy sister becomes part of her expiation for the sins of a previous life. It is one of the paradoxes of Hinduism that as a way of life it

requires so much of community, while at the heart of it there is this inexorable individualism depending on the belief that every person is working out an endless chain of events utterly dependent on what has gone before, and therefore sealed off from all personal give and take. " Each man shall bear his own burden " (Gal. 6.5), so it is taught, but Hinduism cannot recognise the accompanying injunction: " Bear ye one another's burdens " (Gal. 6.2) which, being the law of Christ, harmonises with the very structure of the universe.

The practical consequences are far-reaching. They lead to acceptance of the permanent disabilities of the outcaste, and a complacency about crying social evils, with devout respect for the holiness of saints who deliberately keep aloof from the needs of their fellow-men. As Sydney Cave puts it in his *Hinduism and Christianity* (pp. 70 and 71): " By its teaching that the unfortunate are accursed, the doctrine of *Karma* has stayed the course of pity, and caused a people who are kindly and humane to acquiesce in the degradation of the outcaste and the privations of the widow."

The fact is, of course, that the conditions of everyday life in India constantly challenge the thorough-going doctrine whose grievous consequences we have tried to indicate. There is kindliness and a fire for social justice in many hearts. People suffer for and with those they love, and the ethical consequences for their children's lives of the conduct of parents are manifest everywhere. The new India is awake and full of reforming zeal. Its Governments are threatening the very caste system itself, and concern for common welfare is clearly a leading motive for many. In this generation, above all, the challenge which might almost be ignored in theory, has become much more insistent through the life and work of Mr. Gandhi. It is true that to the last he stoutly maintained a form of Hinduism which scorned as nonsensical a conception of the supreme God as personal, but this attitude was flagrantly contradicted by his unceasing teaching about " doing God's will ", for that cannot be consistent with the idea that God is the attributeless Absolute withdrawn from our affairs.

The challenge which is facing the Hindu religion on this point is well brought out by Dr. Hogg in his striking book, *The Christian Message to the Hindu*, in passages like the following (p. 26):

At the end of the preceding chapter, Dr. Devandanam was quoted as remarking that " Modern Hinduism is making claims on life that cannot be supplied by anything in Hinduism itself ". With the rise of Indian Nationalism which Mr. Gandhi has helped to imbue with spiritual fervour, thousands of Indian young men and women have been fired with ideals of self-denying labour in the sphere of social reform, economic reconstruction, and the uplift of the down-trodden classes. Can those who are spending themselves in such ways remain content with a non-teleological view of the world process and with an Absolute which, in its own immanent perfection, " cares for none of these things "? Philosophical Hinduism has a seductive fascination for the world-weary soul. But let a man be fired with the enthusiasm of a noble mission and with the satisfaction of pursuing enterprises which make calls on his finest powers, and there will be evoked in him a spirit which surely must hunger, unconsciously or consciously, for a less world-negating religious faith.

This challenge directly touches on those failures of the orthodox doctrine of *Karma* in the practical sphere which we have already pointed out. In the first instance a concern for social reform is manifestly directed to evils which are not merely ritual or external, but the outcome of real *moral* evil—of man's inhumanity to man. The practical challenge which men like Mr. Gandhi brought to their generation is thus to face something which belongs not to the individual in isolation, but to society. There is an evil in the world which cannot be eradicated by superficial religious ritual, but only by sustained ethical endeavour.

In the second place, the devotion to the service of the people which has been seen in Gandhiji himself and the best of his followers was so manifest that the sheer weight of the facts destroys the possibility of continuing to explain it away as mere " works of merit " indulged in for self-regarding motives. The service of the leper in hospitals opened under Mr. Gandhi's inspiration, the whole plan of rural uplift, the generous concern for the multitudes of illiterate villagers which underlies the Basic Education movement, these have behind them a genuine affection for a needy brother and are sustained in a way that a mere selfish interest in one's own soul's salvation could not have explained.

Finally, though we may protest that some of Gandhiji's fasts were but means to coerce others (a criticism he himself admitted once or twice) the protest does not apply to them all. Some fasts, and some acts, like his deliberate removal to places

where there was misery and acute tension, did mean a willingness to suffer for others, and an attempt to expiate the sins of his people, which broke radically with the rigid individualism of the *Karma* theory. The embarrassment for orthodox Hinduism is obvious, stoutly though the Mahatma himself might deny it. Deny it he did with the claim that he found the basis of his attitude and conduct in Hinduism. Yet it is not accidental that as a matter of strict fact, he quoted lavishly from the teaching and example of Jesus, that at great crises in his life, including his last fast, he had sung to him the hymn, " When I survey the wondrous Cross ", and that on the wall of his hut he had displayed a picture of the head of Jesus. Nor is it an accident that his assassin was a Brahmin youth, representative of orthodox Hinduism, one of a fanatically Hindu political party, who recognised in this man something threatening the very foundation of his creed.

All of this, which was there in Gandhiji's life, was thrust to the forefront in a shattering way by his death. In an essentially non-Christian country, it was amazing to observe with what unanimity public speakers and the press alike, tried to interpret that death in the light of the Cross. " Gandhiji meets his Calvary " was typical of a thousand newspaper headlines. A friend told me of a public meeting in Madras at which every one of twenty-five speeches by men of all religions made reference to the death of Jesus, and barely one more than the most perfunctory reference to Hindu Scriptures. This was typical. The very men who had declared teaching about vicarious suffering and atonement to be immoral now claimed the death of this man as an act of such vicarious suffering and atonement, and pointed to the Cross. The Christian's revulsion from such statements as verging on the blasphemous was justified when they were made by Christians; when, however, they were made by Hindus, this was replaced by something more like a recognition of clear evidence that God was using a human event to point men towards His own truth, especially to the significance of the supreme sacrifice. One friend put it to me in these words: " this is the kind of death that God can use." Precisely this recognition has been spontaneously expressed to me recently by persons as different as a simple village Christian and an Indian Bishop with an Oxford degree.

Something had happened for which Hinduism could offer no explanation. To find any light at all there must be a turning towards another faith, which is precisely what happened on a vast scale in India in the days following the assassination. Rigid individualism was proved bankrupt. There could be meaning in this event only if we belong to one another and a man can bear another's burdens. No one imagines that this event in itself declares the Gospel message, but no more may one deny the evidence of a turning towards the story of Calvary for some understanding of what had occurred.

It is thus possible in India to-day to point to a new series of facts which have come home to many hearts, which do not conflict with the Gospel but which do make nonsense of the mechanical perfection of the alternative doctrine which had been so firmly entrenched. Yet, obviously these facts do no more than clear the ground for the presentation of the Message, and unless the Church does unequivocally proclaim that Message the events of our time might lead to a new obscuring of its truth by equating the Death on Calvary with the death of this great man of our age. Already there are many attempts to do this, and sometimes genuine perplexity when a Christian refuses to accept the equation.

Yet what has happened in India since the death of Gandhiji has contained overwhelming evidence of how great is the gulf between that death and the atoning Death of Jesus. To-day we see a group of devoted followers cherishing a precious memory and trying, with the sadness natural in such a loss, to plead with men for faithfulness to the example of a dead leader. Nothing more striking than the contrast between this and the thrilling New Testament note of Victory could well be imagined. As this great man had vainly tried to tell many of his followers he himself was but a man, and it is only a continued failure to realise the gravity of sin which can cherish the hope that one man may so bear the sins of his fellows as to open the way of pardon. Gandhi has indeed demonstrated the solidarity of man with his brother and has shown beyond a peradventure that vicarious suffering is possible and not immoral, but this in itself does not begin to declare the Gospel Word. That Word of good cheer, in face of the exceeding greatness of our need, can only be heard when we look

to Him who died on Calvary, who was Very God of Very God.

Where sin has entered in, the restoration of a broken fellowship cannot be a matter of merely ignoring the evil thing. An evil thing has been let loose in the universe, and it cannot be dissolved into nothingness. In this Hinduism and Christianity alike recognise that what has been sown must be reaped. The evil thing must be expiated, its poison must somehow be accepted and by a mightier power transformed and overcome. That mightier power is the power of Love, but the task is beyond man's love. It is not necessary in these pages to labour the truth that even for the saints the Lord's word about "unprofitable servants" who have but done their duty must stand. This is the insight of the writer to the Hebrews who knew that every high priest taken from among men is "bound, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins" (Heb.5.3). This is the point of ultimate despair when men are left to themselves, for they cannot make even a beginning in the victory over sin, and the hope with which men do cling to one leader or another, to one saint or another, to work their redemption, is a mocking hope indeed. This is why the message of the Cross brings hope, only when we know that the Great High Priest, who there accepted the entail of man's sin, was Himself big enough to carry it; only when we know that *God* was in Christ. It is only He who at the first could create, who also can redeem. This was what the apostle realised so profoundly when he declared that "if Christ hath not been raised your faith is vain; you are yet in your sins" (1 Cor. 15.17). This is why the Gospel message rings out in the victory of the resurrection whereby Christ was declared to be the Son of God with power.

Thus we begin to understand how it was *after* realising this tremendous truth that it was God who in Christ was reconciling the world to Himself, that the apostle could venture his daring sentence about filling up that which was lacking of the afflictions of Christ (Col. 1.24). Such a claim is inconceivable *prior* to the realisation that Christ has borne everything for this saint who knew himself the chief of sinners. But in the light of the Cross, in the power of the redemption, this same apostle discovered that Jesus does invite His redeemed into the fellowship of His sufferings. This is still hidden from men who have

not known Jesus as Lord and who vainly try to equate the sufferings of a man with the death of Christ.

For this reason, what has befallen in India has not begun to proclaim the central truth in which alone we hear the sure word of forgiveness. Hinduism is still behind its bastion defences, which deny that the reality of God can conceivably be involved in events in history. No clinging to the work of a great man can fill the gap. The word of the Cross must still be declared in its distinctiveness, but it may be that some of those many who by the death of a great man in their midst have begun to enquire about that other Death which we proclaim, will listen more attentively to our message because of what has occurred. To the Hindu as to the Greek, such a word is " foolishness ", but there are those moments when the message is so given, in its stark contrast to the vagueness of impersonal ideas propounded by the philosophers, that it rings home in one heart or another as the very power of God and the wisdom of God.

It is the very bigness of this event, the awe-inspiring truth that the Creator God has Himself become involved in our sinful world, has Himself borne the sins of many and come to banish despair by the sheer wonder of His love, it is this which shatters the superficialities which had obscured and cheapened the word of forgiveness. How pitiful become the respectabilities on which we, the successors of the Pharisees, still pride ourselves, in face of the costliness of that Death on Calvary. But how marvellously those protests are dissolved which, in the name of a mechanical justice, had shut us up to despair, when, in the light of that Cross, we know that at the heart of the universe is no unmoved Absolute but a living God, no inexorable, impersonal law of *Karma*[1] but One whose name is Love. It is He who had " devised means " that we may be reconciled, and to be forgiven is to be at one with Him.

[1] This paper makes no reference to the criticism of *Karma* which developed within Hinduism itself through the *bhakti* movement. That would call for another study, and the writer believes that there is such a large tract of Hindu life which is not really affected by it that it is not unjust to develop a statement of this nature without specific reference to it.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Triumph of God. Edited by MAX WARREN. Longmans Green & Co. 15s.

BECAUSE of the quality of some of the men whom the Church has sent abroad, as well as because of their wealth of experience, missionaries have been frequent contributors to scholarship. In the past this has been most notable in language study, anthropology, the history of religions and of other civilisations. To-day we have two new reasons for looking to the mission field for help in the whole range of theological studies. First, this is the day of the world-wide Church. If we in Britain are to begin to see the Gospel over against the whole world, we must seek aid from those who have known that same Gospel from a foreign view-point, experienced its transforming power at work in a different setting, shared life in the one holy Church but on a distant shore. Second, this is a time of decline of religion. If, as we are often told, the Church at home has come into a missionary situation, those used to a minority movement in a pagan land may well speak to our condition. In this volume twelve Anglicans, eight of whom write from direct missionary experience, and all from connexion with the missionary task, seek to set out in the light of the Church's world mission, first, what are the Gospel, the victory, and the end, and what are the people, the worship, and the Knowledge of God; second, the Church in relation to our divisions, to the State, and to the community; third, the rival forces, Christianity and Secularism, in the setting of Islam, of an ancient religious culture, of tribal religion, and of the problems of world literacy; the editor sums up in a brief epilogue. Parts of a symposium are inevitably unequal in value. The book as a whole, however, may be accepted as a notable contribution by an able team to subjects of first importance. Not every word spoken will convince, but we cannot afford in these days not to hear from men whose experience has been won in such a warfare.

In Part I—the first six chapters—the most valuable contributions come from Bishop Stephen Neill and Dr. F. W. Dillistone. The former, writing under the title "The Everlasting Gospel", warns us against over-emphasising the crisis of our day. A lifetime in the early sixteenth century saw still more startling change. The Black Death of 1349 resulted in a more dreadful death roll than our

population has known. What is unique in our time is the unification of the world, and industrialism's disruption of community on a world-wide scale. The " planned society " may be nothing more than a return to the primitive community life which preceded individualism. On the other hand lies modern disintegration. Man's need is twofold, for full *individual* life, in *community*. The return to Biblical Theology shows us that this is what Christianity is about. The Old Testament traces the emergence of the individual from the community, then in the New Testament " the Resurrection is that act by which God has been pleased to usher in the new creation ". It is a new creation, not come by evolution from the old, yet there is no breach in continuity. A similar paradox is daily experienced by the Christian: Rebirth means membership of the new community, yet his life must still be lived within the old. There is constant opposition because the two differ in their standards, as we see in Indian caste and African colour bar. We have recovered a sense of the Church as the new community where God's saving love continues to be revealed. " The greatness of the Church is in its witness to that which is beyond itself. The Church exists because in Christ the Kingdom of God has already come. The Church abides and will abide because the purpose of God in Christ cannot fail, and the coming of that Kingdom into power is assured."

This brings us to ask concerning " the Hope set before us ", and it is Dr. Dillistone who answers. He contrasts Isaac Watts' " Jesus shall reign " with the Communists' *Internationale*. For the Christian the end is the Kingdom of God, not of man. But how shall we understand it? All that the Old Testament had to promise to God's People of " inheritance ", and " rest ", and " kingdom " has in the New Testament begun. " Through the mighty works of Christ the promised age has dawned, its true character has been revealed, and its final consummation has been assured." The signs are, that God's Spirit is mightily at work, that the Kingdom is to be proclaimed to all, and that judgment has begun already according to men's response.

The eschatological element is strange to Gentile converts and so is repeatedly in danger of being lost. The Gnostics laid it aside in favour of absorption in the World-Soul. Greek Philosophy made Christianity more mystical than eschatological. Roman imperialism was determinative above all. Christianity in the West concentrated on building up its own system. Missionary motives were imperialist and institutional rather than evangelical and eschatological.

Here one might interject that behind all this there lies a type of eschatology, discredited by history, but eschatology no less. St. Augustine in *De Civitate Dei* believes that the millennial rule of Christ

and His saints began with the fourth century triumph of the Church. This is " realised eschatology " as truly as our author's, only with clearer definition of where the realisation is embodied.

Protestants, Dr. Dillistone believes, were long in coming to the missionary task because they had made mistakes in eschatology. Luther taught that the Apostles had themselves fulfilled our Lord's commission, and now responsibility was limited to one's own nation, *cuius regio*. Calvin saw the Kingdom as God's moral rule in society, to be advanced by God and not by men. So it is that the first impulse to missions comes from the smaller sects.

I feel compelled to question this last statement. Pietism and Moravianism, with their early missionary zeal, are closer to the main stream of Lutheranism than to the sects. Jonathan Edwards, of the central tradition of Calvinism, is full of eschatology (see his *Humble Attempt* published two hundred years ago this year), and he and his book it is, rather than influences from continental Anabaptists, which lie behind the English Baptist pioneers.

Modern missions, he continues, begin with little formulated eschatology. Then came the slogan " the evangelisation of the world in this generation ", closely related to nineteenth-century optimism. (Was it? A juster appraisal is given in this same volume on p. 170.) A tendency grew which interpreted the Kingdom as the world-wide dominion of Christ. This has now been contradicted alike by Biblical scholarship, and by events in the tragic twentieth century. It is for us " to face the present world situation in an attitude neither of naïve optimism nor of black despair ". Perhaps the critic might be forgiven for adding " but something between the two ".

Criticism is indeed invited when those who turn from a too exclusive concern with this-worldly triumph seem in their reaction to rule out the Almighty's chance of triumphing here at all. To put it bluntly, sometimes one wonders how far a return to Biblical Theology is expected to go. Are we, for example, to condemn the " activism " of nineteenth century British Protestants who abolished slavery (shall we say in spite of Matt. 24.45 ff.) and to admit the fatalism of continental Protestants of the twentieth century, who believed between two wars, and still believe after, that there must be recurring catastrophes because Matt. 24.6 ff. says so? To ask this is not to minimise Dr. Dillistone's contribution. It is to point to the magnitude of his subject, and the need for many contributions more.

In Part II Canon Herklots, who is to be welcomed as a Church historian of ecumenical interests, writes a first-rate article showing the connexion between the developing missionary task and the

growth of co-operation both international and interdenominational, with Alexander Duff as the inspirer of the first world conference in 1854, Edinburgh 1910 as the first milestone of the Ecumenical Movement, and developments to within sight of the World Council this year. Some of his sentiments, best expressed by an Anglican, will be applauded elsewhere. He speaks of those whose only concern seems to be " the preserving of an isolated position, complacent in its failure to discern the signs of the times, and insular in its unchurching of world-wide Protestant denominations ".

Dr. Warren's chapter on " Church and State " is a plea for recognising the real Church in cells of witnessing Christians standing clear of compromise with the world. To measure the significance of this article I put it beside another written in 1813. Claudius Buchanan, of Glasgow University before Cambridge, and of the Church of Scotland before becoming a Church of England clergyman, was the main champion of the eastward expansion of the Anglican Communion. Here is a startling example of the Erastianism of his times: " Nothing would more alarm the portentous invader of nations (i.e. Napoleon) than our taking a ' religious possession ' of Hindostan. Five hundred reputable clergy of the English Church . . . would more perplex his views of conquest than an army of 50,000 British soldiers."[1] Buchanan was one of the disciples of Charles Simeon, and it was from Simeon's church at Cambridge that Dr. Warren went to C.M.S. House. How different is his churchmanship! In Scotland too the Church has changed since Buchanan's boyhood. With its different outworking of relationships between State and Church, reaction here might not be so largely negative. If Dr. Warren is ready to abandon the Constantinian connexion, Scotland might claim to have redeemed it.

Of Part III the chapter called " Christianity, Secularism, and the Ancient Religious Cultures " is the most outstanding, though the title is unfortunate in not making it clear that its limit is Indian cultures. Its material might well be developed into an important book, on the lines of Cochrane's *Christianity and Classical Culture*, and Mr. C. S. Milford shows himself the man who could do it.

Here and there in the book some corrections need to be made. On p. 169 it is stated that " more than half the languages of the world ", and on p. 327 that " two thirds of the languages into which the Bible is . . . translated, were unwritten until the missionaries wrote them "! The British and Foreign Bible Society in 1943 gave me these figures: The Bible is, wholly or in part, translated into 1,120 languages; in the case of about 300 of them the script is the work of the translator. Are these writers going back to the early

[1] Quoted in J. McLeod Campbell's *Christian History in the Making*, p. 87.

Middle Ages and counting the work of Ulfilas as influencing all Teutonic languages?' The context makes it look like an overstatement with regard to modern missions

Books are misnamed in footnotes on pp. 159 and 295. Page 326 contains two serious mis-statements. " When the Franciscans came to China they found stone crosses but no Christians." They not only found other Christians but roused Nestorian opposition by their sheep-stealing methods, especially with regard to the Christian King George of the Onguts. It is untrue to say that it was " nearly two centuries " before Protestant missionaries made use of literature. The University Library in Glasgow has a copy of John Eliot's (American) Indian Bible dated 1663

Two of the authors indulge in flights of metaphor which to this reviewer seem both mixed and mixing: " The Manger and the Cross converge in the true asceticism of the little child, which is the hall-mark of the commonsense of the Gospel " (p. 40). " The heavy pressure of communal Islam and the vision of new experience in Christ, causing a longing for new birth, reduce seekers to a state of psychological dualism and divided allegiance." Need people write like this?

It is unfortunate that in Section III the Far East is left out. Four of the eight writers here listed as former or present missionaries belong to India. China has always a contribution, and usually one of practical commonsense.

JOHN FOSTER

The Word as Truth. By ALAN FAIRWEATHER. Lutterworth. 10s. 6d.

THIS book was published some time ago but the issues raised are of present-day significance. The main theme is that revelation in its special Christian meaning, while having as its source a direct word of God uttered in person, inheres also as an abiding effect, quality and character in the rationalised form which that word inevitably takes in the mind of the man to whom this word is spoken. It is therefore continued and prolonged in the " truth " or statement which is the vehicle of its proclamation. God must first speak in order that the process of revelation may be set going in the world at all. But He need not continue directly to speak in order that revelation may continue. He can even withdraw His presence without essentially impairing the revelation which He has given. Since revelation is given to man it will accommodate itself to the forms of human thought, and so, it will reach its term in rationalised truth and statement capable of being worked up into ever more adequate synthesis. This whole movement in the direction of increasing sys-

tematisation of truth and ever widening synthesis is clearly in line with the purpose of God in revelation, inasmuch as revelation is given to man in order to meet the needs of his life. In this whole movement, revelation is immanent. It is recognised that the rationalised form which the Word of God takes in the mind of man is not in itself synonymous with revelation, for man is sinful and finite. Nevertheless it is seen as revelation in and through the illumining action of the Holy Spirit on the mind which conceives it and to which it is conveyed. We may note then, that the direct presence and action of God is in some sense necessary for " truth " to become revelation, unless indeed the Holy Spirit be thought of as a mere power or effect of God somehow detachable from His person; and it is in some such way that He must be conceived if the presuppositions of the writer are to be sustained. But the motive which inspires the writer's purpose is abundantly clear. It is to maintain the essentially unbroken continuity between man and God, between the world as apprehensible by man's reason and the original creation, between the forms of man's reason and the determinations of the divine mind. This continuity still remaining, in spite of man's fall and sin, the Holy Spirit may be thought of as a perpetual and abiding gift to man, bound up with his environment and available to him without more ado as he seeks to relate himself truly to that environment. Thus, the Holy Spirit, though transcendent in nature and origin, is immanent in presence and working. There is therefore no deep cleft between God and man which is unbridgeable save from God's side and by God's own action, no radical evil which can be overcome only by God Himself. All that is really needed is that God should take the initiative, leaving man to follow. The writer expressly affirms a synergistic doctrine of grace and salvation.

The theme of the book is developed by means of a critical examination of the views upon revelation of St. Thomas Aquinas and Karl Barth. The writer finds Aquinas lacking in the realisation of the necessity for a direct personal presence and address of God to man in the original giving of revelation, and Barth, in the recognition of the revelationary effect, character, and quality, belonging to the statements, truths and propositions which are the term of the revelation in the minds of those who receive it. The deficiency of Aquinas is, however, according to the writer, more apparent than real, for in his treatment he is working within the limits of metaphysical presuppositions common to him and to those non-believers to whom he is seeking to commend the reality of divine revelation. These limits do not really condition his own apprehension, but only his mode of conception in the task which he set before him, which

was to commend Christianity in terms of a sound philosophy. Barth's deficiency is on the other hand real and radical. By his insistence on the Word of God as at all times the presence and action of the speaking God, he digs a gulf between revelation and truth as rationally apprehended, denies all human mediation of the Word of God, thus emptying Scripture and proclamation of all real revelationary content, makes communion between God and sinful man essentially impossible, removes the divine purpose out of the sphere of time and history, and puts a Christian philosophy out of court. Barth certainly performs a service in that he emphasises in a particularly striking way the divine initiative in revelation, thus supplying what is formally lacking in Aquinas. But he goes astray in that he develops his conception of revelation not from the witness of scripture, though he continually appeals to it, but from the initial assumption of a cosmic fall and of the radical discontinuity of God and man. This assumption, as conditioning the whole character of revelation, is declared to be pagan and not Christian in origin; its real roots go back to Manichaeism.

Now it is not our purpose to follow in detail the anti-Barthian polemic which is so striking a feature of Mr. Fairweather's book. What we are concerned with is the positive position which is developed by way of contrast. And first, we are conscious of surprise that the author does not seem to see that the position which he seeks to commend, in so far as it is concerned with special revelation, leads by quick and easy stages straight into the heart of Catholicism, not to say Papalism. It is noteworthy that he accuses both Luther and Calvin of separatism, meaning by that, we suppose, the removal of grace out of the sphere of actual life, and that he does not exempt Augustine from that accusation. It is also noteworthy that he warmly approves a synergism against which the whole Reformation movement was a sustained protest. And if revelation is really convertible into rationalised propositions which in themselves conserve its nature and quality, so that all that is needed for the perception and apprehension of this nature and quality is an illumining of the mind by the Holy Spirit; if furthermore the Church, as the sphere where these propositions are preserved and handed on, and where this spiritual illumining takes place, is as the writer says, the extension of the Incarnation, where are we but in the midst of Catholicism? Here is an issue which cannot be evaded and it must be sharpened. The writer contends that the scriptural truths as statements are in themselves revelation. They do not need to be *made* revelation. They only need to be *perceived* as revelation. Certainly they are not revelation in their stark objectivity. They are revelation in their spiritual relevance to finite and sinful man. But as truths they are

revelation, as integrated into the body of his rational knowledge, as supplying that which his reason of itself cannot attain. But this must mean that they are truths in so far as they are commands—commands to which is attached grace. To the truth of revelation belongs authority and command. Moreover, to the human person of the witness of these truths belongs authority. These truths are given to him not for himself alone, but that he may pass them on to others. And for that purpose he is directly confronted with the speaking God and so he becomes the authoritative spokesman of these truths. The speaking God having withdrawn Himself, he stands before the people in His place. The authority of God passes as it were into his person. Mr. Fairweather would of course resist this conclusion, but from his premisses it is inevitable. Were the direct address of God not necessary for these truths to make their appearance; were these truths mere instruments to bring us to revelation instead of being instruments to bring revelation to us; were the illumining of the Holy Spirit in itself sufficient to bring them out of our moral and spiritual environment—the conclusion could no doubt be evaded. But the contrary is the case according to the author's presuppositions. Our contention is that he has affirmed all the basic positions of Catholicism. Even Papalism affirms the necessity for supernatural illumination if man is to believe what God reveals. But this illumination does not and cannot dispense with the necessity for an external authority to conserve, apply, and hand on the truths of revelation. How could it, since the very authority of God Himself, directly asserted, is necessary to reveal these truths? Mr. Fairweather cannot have it both ways. If the illumining of the mind by the Holy Spirit be sufficient for the *preservation* of these truths, why is an initial act of God required for the *giving* of them? They are not discontinuous with the forms of the natural reason; they present rather that full synthesis to which the syntheses of the natural reason are inadequate. If on the other hand an initial divine act is necessary to start revelation going, the effect of this authoritative act must pass into the proclaimers of these truths, and the Pope sooner or later appears on the scene.

But let us now consider the position of the writer in itself and apart from this implication. The revelationary quality of these rationalised truths is said to follow from the fact that the effect of the presence and action of God is " reactive " in the recipient of revelation, let us say, in the prophet. It is admitted of course that the reaction is not pure because of sin. And this admission will doubtless be taken as a sufficient guarantee against the implication of Catholicism which we have suggested. That it is no such guarantee, we regard as involved in the position that a direct speaking of God is

necessary at the first for the giving of revelation. This direct speaking must be in some sense reproduced under the form of a human authority. But to waive this point for the moment, the reaction of the prophet's mind to the direct Word of God must be, according to the writer, sufficiently intense and strong to leave on his mind an abiding impress of that Word, and to ensure that his publication of it as truth and idea remains essentially identical with revelation. But the words " reactive " and " reaction " suggest something automatic, something therefore which cannot set up any obstacle to the divine speaking. A reaction is simply a resultant. Is that what happens when God speaks to man? Surely in place of the word reaction we need to put the word response. Are then responses to revelation, revelation itself? Can they dispense with the presence and action of the revealing God? Certainly they can witness to revelation, direct the mind to it, but in no way can they be identical with it. Mr. Fairweather puts his fundamental difference with Barth as follows: " What we take to be the real difference between the Barthian view and our own may be briefly stated thus. The former regards the written Word as instrumentally used by God, not to bring revelation to us, but to bring us to revelation. . . . In contrast, we regard the written Word as bringing revelation to us ! " It may be questioned whether Barth would concur in this statement of his view. Since it is God using the written Word, and not the mere human handing on of that Word, that brings revelation to pass, He uses it to bring revelation to us. But He *uses* it for that purpose. It does not effect that purpose apart from His use. Moreover Barth would hardly speak about us being brought to revelation. Revelation is always brought to us. But be this as it may, a response to revelation, a witness to revelation, such as in the Barthian view the Bible is, cannot in itself be the same thing as revelation itself. It can *become* so through God's own act, and does become so, because in Barth's view the Biblical witness to revelation is integral to revelation itself. The supreme function of the Holy Spirit as given to men is to create genuine witness; in fact, to turn merely human witness into the Word of God. Had Mr. Fairweather followed Barth beyond the first half volume of his *Dogmatik*, he would have been compelled to recognise the cogency of his insistence on this point. But throughout his whole criticism he fails to realise how indissolubly in Barth's view God has connected His Word and Spirit with the word of scripture. Apart from the truths of scripture there is no Word of God, none at least which we can hear and the theologian take note of. Mr. Fairweather seems to regard the connexion which Barth declares to exist between the Word of God and the truths of scripture as purely contingent and indeed arbitrary, and

therefore as having nothing to do with revelation proper. The content of revelation which is the Word of God has no real connexion with the form, which is the truths of scripture. God's revelation comes in a number of isolated and spasmodic acts, so that there is no unity in the Word of God. If that were really Barth's view, how could he insist as he does that the scriptures must rule in the Church? Certainly Barth is concerned to conserve the freedom of God, to insist that God is really God and not man's reason hypostasised, for the freedom of God is the ultimate source of all truth. But if God has connected His Word with word of scripture, that means that this connexion is of the most real and vital kind. It means that a promise is attached to scripture, and for a promise we have to wait.

But we can best clarify the situation with an illustration from scripture itself. In the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we learn that the disciples were to remain in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit had come upon them. Then they would become Christ's witnesses, that is, the witnesses of His Resurrection in Jerusalem and in all Judaea and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. They were not to rush out forthwith and announce the resurrection. Why not? Clearly because the resurrection as truth and the resurrection as revelation were not identical. The truth and the revelation were indissolubly connected, but just as certainly were they differentiated. The resurrection as lying within the framework of the continuity of world history, the resurrection as prolonging its effects " horizontally ", to quote one of Mr. Fairweather's words; the resurrection as an event which might be integrated into a philosophy of history —were the very opposite of the resurrection as the Word of God. The resurrection was not " historical " event, it was eschatological event, taking place in history. It was the descent of God upon history. In order that the message of the resurrection might become true and genuine witness, God must directly act, for the resurrection was His direct action. The effect of it must be given perpendicularly, it could not be prolonged horizontally by direct human transmission. While God had bound Himself to the truth of it, He remained free in respect of the revelation of it. How otherwise could it have been His own act? This illustration gives the clue to the nature of Biblical witness generally. Revelation is connected with the witness, but not horizontally, not immanently. It is connected by God, from above. And so it is truly connected. The prophet can therefore say: " Thus saith the Lord!" Just because he is not simply handing on his impressions, his reactions, his thoughts or ideas of revelation, he can appeal to God to substantiate his word. But he knows that God Himself must substantiate it.

How then does all this affect us as thinkers in the realm of divine

truth? It surely means that we cannot forthwith proceed to systematise the ideas of the Bible as if we were thereby presenting a kind of synthesis of revelation. Of course we must systematise and synthesise. As thinkers we can do no other. But we must continually submit all that we accomplish in this way to the judgment of the Word of God. And that means, concretely, that our whole thinking must be conceived of as a mode of prayer, and must be attended with the activity of prayer: and, be it noted, not any kind of prayer, but that kind of prayer which the Bible directly awakens and inspires. This Biblical prayer, if we may so speak, is the waiting for the Holy Spirit which, or rather whom, God has connected with scripture; and to it is attached the promise of revelation.

We would suggest that the fundamental defect of Mr. Fairweather's treatment is that it presents no adqeuate discussion of the idea of truth. It is assumed throughout that truth is somehow detachable from divine determination, and that as detachable it can be absolutised. Thus revelation can be conceived as truth, even when that truth is divorced from the speaking God. But " everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice!"

We cannot take our leave of Mr. Fairweather's book without expressing dissatisfaction with his treatment of the theme of the divine holiness. It is insisted that God comes directly to the sinner in his sin. In other words justification is virtually sacrificed to sanctification—another momentous capitulation to Catholicism. God holds communion with the sinner, yes, but on the basis of forgiveness and justification. He holds communion with the sinner *in Christ* the sinless. The divine holiness is not ignored but established in the grace of the divine communion. We conclude by saying that our examination of Mr. Fairweather's book has been confined to a criticism of the main theme which it develops and expounds. Were we dealing with the mode of treatment we could not withold our admiration from the learning and high critical ability which it displays.

F. W. Camfield

The Christian Knowledge of God. By W. W. Bryden. The Thorn Press, Toronto.

Most of us are familiar with books on the subject of our knowledge of God: indeed the climate, in which in this country most of our theologians receive their philosophical education, is conducive to their production. Why then advertise this work by a Canadian theologian, especially when in literary style it is markedly inferior to several home products? Because it seems to me a most deeply theological treatment of the problem, and that is more than can be said of many more superficial attractive treatments.

What do I mean by that? We all of us know books and essays bearing such titles as " Our Knowledge of the External World ", " An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation ", " Our Knowledge of Other Minds ", " The Nature of Historical Knowledge ", and so on. It is commonplace to point out that since Descartes, the " Problem of Knowledge " in one form or another has preoccupied philosophers. So much that is characteristic of modern technical philosophy has its roots in this preoccupation. One need only mention the various idealisms, Berkeleyan, Kantian, Hegelian, the positivist and empiricist tradition, the developments in logic which have sprung from the determination of men like Frege, Russell and Whitehead to unravel the problems relating to mathematical demonstration, the historicism of men like Dilthey and Collingwood, even the contemporary concern to reduce philosophical problems to questions of verbal meaning and syntactical relation. One can well understand the attraction to the theologian to follow the fashion.

But too often, in Dr. Bryden's view, the theologians got off on the wrong foot, and taking for granted that there was something called " Knowledge of God " to be analysed and defined, treated their investigation as something that could altogether leave out of account what the New Testament says on precisely that subject. For " Knowledge " is after all a New Testament conception: " know " is certainly one of the great New Testament words. And the New Testament in its exposition of this concept has much to say that is profoundly significant for the professional epistemologist. For the New Testament idea of knowledge, as for so many of our most fundamental ideas, we must apply to Christ. The New Testament thrusts upon us the fact of a new dimension of knowledge—something that because it is *sui generis* cannot be treated as generically one with knowledge as we know it—something that bursts open any generalised concept of knowledge we have formed.

Bryden's book is invaluable to the philosopher because he does ram this point home: he *shows*, as far as a man can show, just what differentiates knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ from other knowledge. To read his book is almost an obligation to the philosopher who is a Christian: for it makes him see what it is that Paul and John (for instance) are saying concerning knowledge that is relevant to him. We are familiar with the protest of men like Kierkegaard against the tyranny of the idea of direct communication, and with what they prophetically asserted concerning the uniqueness of the event of Revelation. Familiar enough: but familiarity can so easily convert such insight into an idea to be possessed and enjoyed, expanded and dealt with intelligently, unless we have books like Bryden's to remind us of the consequences of what we

are coming to take for granted, and therefore in its inwardness to forget. He shows us something of the dialectic of faith with autonomous, self-deifying reason: he reveals how precariously we are held in a knowledge-relation to God in Christ that can be truly called knowledge of faith. He has taken the measure of the demonic, and sees something ahead of the discipline continually needed to purge our attitudes of its taint.

His book does not, however, offer us a positive concept of what the Christian practice of philosophy should be. It is more a work on theology for philosophers, a warning to them and also to would-be philosophical theologians. If I am right in judging that it is valuable before all else in its repeated challenge to the reader to measure Knowledge of God by the event of Christ's coming, it requires to be complemented by some more positive valuation of what philosophy is all about. Towards the end Bryden makes some provocative allusions to contemporary politics, evidence of his own loyalty to his proclaimed view of Christianity, as no more other-worldly in the accepted sense than this-worldly. One could have wished he had said more of the worth of the activities practised under the name of philosophy.

This whole book abounds in provocative *obiter dicta* and contains many passages of remarkable insight. The author is most suggestive in his fourth chapter; but I would ask him how far he is justified on his own view of the historical Christ in his unexpected bouquet to Bultmann's strange work? He says many things with which I should like to quarrel; but I can only end on a note of admiration. He has given us a book which says something, which is not afraid to face the consequences of the claim that there is a place, the event of Christ, in which men are known to themselves, known not as failing here or succeeding there, or puzzled now or understanding then, but as themselves. Where knowledge, the " idea of knowledge ", is concerned, it is the claim of the New Testament that there is this place, that this event has happened, and having happened is always happening. Bryden's book bids us most powerfully remember that, when we take this fact for granted, we must after all allow a place for Knowledge of God in our map of the mind's possibilities.

D. M. MacKinnon

Religion. By Nathaniel Micklem. Oxford University Press. 5s.

When his students complained that an examination paper was too long for the time allowed, or when members of his staff complained that they could not cover their subject in the prescribed number of lectures, the late President A. C. McGiffert used to claim that any

topic could be treated at any required length, however small, or however great. As an extreme example he would say that, if necessary, he could give a twenty minutes lecture on the course taken by the history of the Christian Church or of Christian dogma. It was all a matter of thinking and writing to scale. Nevertheless it is extremely difficult to write a good short book on a large subject, and the difficulty is increased rather than diminished when the subject is such that all likely readers have already a diffused and sporadic acquaintance with it. This is a task for which a master's hand is needed, and the Home University Library already contains some masterly little books of this kind, such as the late Edwyn Bevan's *Christianity* and Dr. Clement Webb's *History of Philosophy*.

The Principal of Mansfield is to be sincerely congratulated on the success with which, in this recent addition to the Library, he has compressed the story of world religion into a couple of hundred very small pages. The whole field is surveyed, but in so fresh and interesting a way that we have no feeling of reading a lifeless summary as in an encyclopedia article. Instead of presenting us with a mere chronicle of events and doctrines, Dr. Micklem has engaged his historical imagination and power of sympathetic understanding in the service of a synoptic view of the entire religious scene. His ten chapters do not bear the names of the separate religious systems, but rather of the different " moments " which he believes to run through a large number of different systems—the attachment to the impersonal sacred, the worship of nature, prophetic religion, mystical devotion, etc. If the result sometimes seems to be that too little attention is paid to chronological sequence, we are at least spared the imposition of a rigid " evolutionary " pattern, as well as the too easy identification of the crude with the primitive. But the most refreshing feature of the book is its refusal to appraise the religious life of men in terms merely of the formal systems of doctrine, Buddhist, Confucian, Mohammedan or what not, to which they are supposed to adhere. " We are too apt to parcel out men among the religions of the world, declaring that savages believe this, Hindus that, and Buddhists something else. That may be true on paper, but it is not true of men." Again, " The diversely named religions which men profess do not correspond with the real differences of religious outlook or attainment. The mystics, the ascetics, the devotees, the rationalists speak kindred dialects across the divisions of religious profession and often appear more akin to their fellows in other religions than to the majority of those who nominally share their faith. "

The question of the truth of religion and of the relation of Chris-

tianity to other faiths does not fall within the scope of Dr. Micklem's inquiry, though it is touched upon in the short concluding chapter. " The picture of religion set forth in these pages," he writes, " and the considerations to which it gives rise may be accepted by the sceptic without any diminution in his personal scepticism." The question whether Christianity is the " crown " or the negation of the great pagan systems is left unsettled. Yet it is inevitable that there should from time to time be some betrayal of the writer's own presuppositions and point of view. It is clear that we have here a *sympathetic* approach to the religious quest, or rather response, of mankind as a whole. Little or nothing in the story is dismissed as mere " idolatry " or devilish imposture. The combination of realism with charitable understanding is not dissimilar to that shown in such a modern Roman Catholic treatment as Otto Karrer's *Religions of Mankind.*

JOHN BAILLIE

The Christian Future, or The Modern Mind Outrun. By E. ROSENSTOCK-HUESSY. S.C.M. Press. 8s. 6d.

THE author of this book is a Swiss, who throughout his life of sixty years has had a mind that was continually learning from the things that happened to him. Both in Silesia in 1926 and in America he has had experience of the extraordinary value of work-camps as places for the creation of true community and of personal relations in a disintegrating world. He has lived for the last fifteen years in America, where he now is a Professor at Dartmouth College. This volume should be judged not as the tidy exposition of a thesis, but as a contribution exacted from the author by the urgent needs of his times: a contribution to a conversation carried on by men aware of a great crisis.

It is certainly no usual book. It is an extraordinary mixture of brilliant insight, aphorism and perversity. In the reviewer's opinion the brilliance is to be found mostly in the sociological analysis, and the perversity in the Christology.

Rosenstock-Huessy starts with a picture of the modern world. The great conflicts are no longer those between nation and nation, between Communism and racialism, or between Church and State. For mankind, with all its varying forms of community, from the family upwards, is in danger of being engulfed in the anonymous, speechless great Society—global economic co-operation. For modern man life is divided into two spheres: the suburb and the factory. He lives in the suburb, which is separated from the realities

whereby he earns his daily bread. The agonies of birth and death are curtained off in nursing homes and hospitals. Religion and tragedy and adventure are stifled.

In the factory or office, man is no longer a member of his family, nor a person, but a hand, a mere atom. Indeed, the true person is not to be found in the home either, but perhaps only on the road travelled daily between factory and home, home and factory. Can we not erect an oxygen tent by the roadside to save this man's life? Can we not bring him into real personal contact with other men as a person among persons? If so, men would no longer be able to hide behind their suburban and business masks. A true community would be born; the permission of smaller conflicts and disagreements might prevent armed wars on the great scale.

An experience of this kind was given to the author at Camp William James between 1939-42 when, with President Roosevelt's approval, he helped to organise a camp of college and farm youth who undertook socially necessary tasks for the service of some rural and urban communities in Vermont. It was felt that something spiritually new was created there, a cohesive community which " had made a spiritual immigration into this world ".

In the modern emasculated world, how is Christianity to be saved? The question is a false one. Christ Himself taught that he who loses his life shall save it, and only as we in Christ's Spirit learn to die that we may live, shall we be Christians. It is thus not a question of our saving Christianity, but of Christianity's saving us. Further, it is Christianity which has given to us the conviction that the world is one, that God is the Father of all, that history also is one, with beginning, middle and end. Here Christ contends with all pagan and neo-pagan mythologies, each of which fights against the other for the absolute supremacy of some merely relative worth. By dying to rise again, He has shown us how we also can die to live, and thus be reconciled with each other, man with man, race with race, fathers with sons.

This is the belief which the Athanasian Creed seeks to express. Its first article asserts the creatorship and fatherhood of the one God; its second asserts our liberty to die to our old selves, given us by Christ's life, death and resurrection; and its third the unity and new life created by the Spirit. It is the unity of the family of mankind that is Christianity's special task to achieve in this age, but Christ's Spirit has so penetrated the world that often it works most clearly in ways that are outside the institutional Church. To-day the Spirit must find many new forms of incarnation in the world. The task of creating the one human family involves the feeding of the peoples. But " without Christianity the new economy must become a night-

mare world-state which will engulf all liberty and every variety of man " (p. 160).

The book closes with a wonderfully suggestive chapter called " Warriors and Thinkers ". Faced by the problems of authority and freedom in education and of the moral responsibility of the educators, Rosenstock-Huessy has asserted that the pragmatist, optimistic, unenthusiastic ethics of Dewey and his school were plausible only in an America where there was a sufficient agreement on the main values of life. But that agreement could not be preserved without effort for ever: it had been won by men who were not willing, like Dewey, to be silent about their religious faith. It had been achieved because men were ready to undergo sacrifice for it. Through the whole world we have become aware of a *trahison des clercs*. The learned have frowned on enthusiasm of all kinds, have refused to speak with authority or emphasis on anything, have given no guidance on the great problems. So the young in many countries have turned to leaders who gave out heat but no light. But now the thinkers must give leadership to the fighters, the fathers to the sons, each must be integrated with the other, realising that each class has its true part to play.

One of the great fallacies of the individualist age has been to say " the child is father to the man ". In a physical sense this is true. The generations run from birth to death, but in spiritual matters the significant period is that from mid-generation to mid-generation. Each generation does not soliloquise, each is in conversation with its parents or its sons. Our children's background is identical with our foreground. The principle of dying to live, of mutual confrontation, of true authority and true freedom, of true encounter, must be embodied in the relationship between the generations. It is foolish to regard this as a temporary problem, as if ours were an exceptional age of transition. All ages have this character, for the essence of time is transition.

The book closes with some interesting suggestions as to how in our industrialised world a more personal structure can be introduced. We cannot go back to medievalism, nor to the family life of the age of the Reformation (1500-1900), where the family was the unit of organisation both in religious and economic matters. One of our troubles is that our units of industrial organisation are too large, and the periods during which we can rely on association with our fellow-workers are too short for true fellowship. Both these truths were discovered afresh by men on service during the war. Could some such rhythm of time, and size of grouping not be introduced within the framework of our industrial life?

There is not space here to give more than one instance of the

gift of vivid imagination, and aphorism, which flashes out often from his pages. There is surely genius in the insight which, recognising that the altar is the centre of the life of the Church, and the bed and hearth the centre of the family, places at the centre of our states, corporations, labour unions, Union Now and the Union of all the Churches—a typewriter! (p. 138).

But we must look now for a moment at Rosenstock-Huessy's theology which, speaking frankly, is often exasperating. Several times he employs the common modernist device of taking some well-known doctrine such as the resurrection of the body and confidently expounding under these terms something quite different from what the Church has always understood by them. For instance, our attention is drawn to the fact of the reincarnation of different types of Christian character down the ages. Lincoln is thus a true successor of St. Francis. This is a valid and interesting observation, but one must object when he speaks in those terms of the resurrection of the body (p. 109).

A word must now be said about Rosenstock-Huessy's account of Christ, though this is not the important part of his book. The Christology is inevitably most inadequate, since it seeks to account for the deity of Christ only in terms of His humanity. Jesus " overcame man's dividedness by living once for all the specific law of the human kind, namely, that man can progress from fragmentariness to completeness only by surviving the death of his old Adam, his old allegiances, and beginning new ones " (p. 66).

It looks as if for Rosenstock-Huessy Jesus was merely the first man to discover the law of human nature, that he who denies himself and dies, rises again. Having laid this truth bare, He becomes our Archetype. We also can die to live. But such death is almost a device to escape death, one feels, like the self-immolation of the phoenix! This theory is like an unstrung bow; it misses all the tremendous tension of orthodox Christology. For Christ in dying represents not merely the perfect man, but God and His claim on the loyalties of man, and God's inexorable love to man. Here was no death as a mere means to resurrection, but the inevitable outcome of God's love and man's sin. And if we die or suffer for Him, it is in response to the love and claim of God thus revealed, and we commit our cause to the God who raised Him up.

Starting with his interpretation of Christ purely in terms of His manhood, Rosenstock-Huessy has the same difficulty as Schleiermacher in securing for Jesus a position of adequate singularity. Thus he says: " Something new came into being then, not a man as part of the world, but The Man, who gives meaning to the world. Likewise in His name we enter a realm of freedom unknown to

mere heirs" (p. 103). And in illustration he recalls that all later crusades "derive their name, if it is properly given, from the first Crusade"—a most unfortunate illustration, for however outstanding this was only the first of a series. If this Christology be true, how are we in any way advanced from Schleiermacher when he taught that Christ was merely the first man to realise the feeling of absolute dependence upon God?

The background of the author's thought is quite clear in the next citation: "That Jesus was *the* Son of God means that He was the definite historic eventuation of man's divinity. . . . He united the divine and the human once and for all, and to speak of a second or third Christ would be to deny the essence of His achievement, and cancel the unification of mankind which He began" (p. 107). Surely the kind of Christ who is pictured here has not the power to break open the wheel of history, flatten it out, and give it a beginning, a middle and end. Only God can do that by Himself speaking and acting once and for all.

It is puzzling why writers who hold such reduced views should desire to hold on to the article of our Lord's divinity, even in name. That article surely means that He is the express image of the Father in a sense that we cannot be, that God is exactly like Him, or rather, that Jesus Christ is the revelation of the Power that is behind all reality. Such illogicality as some liberals practise in this matter could not escape notice in much humbler spheres than doctrine. What should we think of a shop assistant who, in trying to sell us a rabbit, pointed out that it was such a fine one that for this reason it was not just a rabbit, but also, somehow, mysteriously, a hare?

All these criticisms do not destroy the great value of this book; they merely go to show that its author has not yet thought out clearly the central points in his theology.

Nevertheless, the book is full of suggestiveness. Perhaps the main question it leaves in the reviewer's mind is this. How far have the disintegration of society and the consequent depersonalisation of man gone? If the family as a sphere of personal responsibility has been largely eroded, and if man's freedom in his business life is minimal, is it true, as the author suggests, that modern man is losing the capacity to sin? If as he says the modern sinners are the collectives, can these have guilt which is not the guilt of persons connected with them?

It is true that the preaching of the Gospel will have to be modified to fit our age, but can we deny that the excuse of depersonalisation is not in part a subterfuge? If we are to define man as still created in the divine image, must we not still hold him responsible before God, though the area of his responsibility is being whittled away?

In any case our obligation to create new forms of community in which true personal being can flourish, remains as urgent as Rosenstock-Huessy claims it to be.

DAVID CAIRNS

The Teaching of the Church Regarding Baptism. By KARL BARTH. Translated by Ernest A. Payne. S.C.M. Press. 2s. 6d.

The Theology of Christian Initiation. S.P.C.K.

THE first of these is a lecture delivered by Karl Barth in May 1943 to a gathering of Swiss Theological Students and now appearing in an English translation by Ernest A. Payne.

" The question of baptism reaches to the very height and depth of the Church's responsibility ", but present teaching and practice tend to pervert and obscure the content of baptism and are in large measure responsible for the present distress of the Church. This is the underlying motive of Barth's lecture.

He finds the institution of baptism in Christ's submitting to the baptism of John:

> Baptism was thereby made a living and expressive representation of Christ's high priestly death and resurrection. Whoever now is baptised may expect like Him to see the heavens opened, to hear the voice of the Father, and to share in the Holy Spirit. Therefore it is called, and indeed is, baptism in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. . . . All other passages—e.g. Matt. 28.19—are to be understood as the ratification and enforcement of this actual " institution " of baptism.

. It has the necessity of a command but not the necessity of an indispensable medium; its meaning and intention is the glorifying of God in the building up of the Church; it is the acted parable of Christ's death; it shows " that the Church and those baptised within her . . . are not dependent on themselves but that faith has its ground and essence in the objective reality of the divine covenant of grace "; " in principle it can only be celebrated within the framework of the public worship of God "; it is a public not a private act; its efficacy, that " the baptised person is placed once for all under the sign of hope ". " Baptism without the willingness and readiness of the baptised is true, effectual and effective baptism, but it is not correct; it is not done in obedience, it is not administered according to proper order and therefore it is necessarily clouded baptism . . . it is a wound in the body of the Church . . . and an arbitrary and despotic practice."

The New Testament texts generally appealed to in support of infant baptism are examined and dismissed as only " a thin thread

to which one may perhaps hold " for " from the standpoint of a doctrine of baptism, infant baptism can hardly be preserved without exegetical and practical artifices and sophisms ". The conclusion reached is: " What is wanted is very simple; instead of the present infant baptism, a baptism which on the part of the baptised is a responsible act."

Such are salient points in Barth's exposition. I should like to single out two for comment. The first—the institution of baptism. To find the institution in Christ's submitting to the baptism of John is ingenious but it implies a continuity between the baptism of John and Christian baptism which the New Testament is at considerable pains to deny. There is the very definite contrast which the Gospels make John himself draw between his baptism and the baptism of " one mightier than I ". And there are further significant passages which bear this out, e.g. John 4.2 which implies that for a time the disciples practised the baptism of John " though Jesus himself baptised not ", but the disciples seem to have discontinued the practice and there is no hint of it anywhere else in the Gospels, even when the twelve and later the seventy were sent out, there is no mention of baptism in the detailed instructions given to them. If Christ instituted baptism when He submitted to John's baptism, why the significant omission of a command to baptise here? Equally significant is Acts 19.1-5 where St. Paul baptises " in the name of the Lord Jesus " certain disciples at Ephesus who had already been baptised by John's baptism. Evidently St. Paul did not recognise the baptism of John as valid baptism at all. It seems that we have to admit that there is no explicit institution of Christian baptism such as we have of the Lord's Supper, though there is no doubt about the practice of it and the belief that it was instituted by our Lord is attested by Matthew 28.19 and John 3.5.

The second is infant baptism. This is the section which will rouse the fullest controversy. It raises the old question as to the nature of the Church, whether we see it, as Wotherspoon says, " as a ' substantive corporation ' continuous from its foundation and constituted by providential election to grace, or as a self-associated company of individuals who have appropriated the offer of salvation " (*Religious Values in the Sacraments*, p. 167). Barth seems to choose the latter, but is it quite true or fair to suggest, as he does, that " the really operative, extraneous ground for infant baptism is that to-day one does not want to renounce the present form of the national church "? May it not be that men still feel that little children should early be brought " under the sign of hope "? Further there are unhappy memories of attempts to go back on the traditional practice, as Clow reminds us: " The excesses of John of

Leiden and his followers struck a blow at the Reformation movement and ended in a reaction movement which led some back to Rome. No doctrine can survive a moral betrayal and Anabaptism became a term of contempt. To this day on the continent any strict doctrine of either the mode or the subjects of baptism has to face a chill and suspicious atmosphere " (*Church and Sacraments*, p. 124).

In contrast to Barth we have *The Christian Theology of Initiation*—" Being the Report of a Theological Commission appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to advise on the relations between Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion."

This sets out to consider Christian initiation in the Apostolic age, then in the early church and later developments; it expounds the teaching of the Church of England on the subject and ends with some problems and difficulties. In Christian initiation it sees two stages—baptism and confirmation—the authority for which it finds in the apostolic laying-on-of-hands, though it admits that the evidence for all that is involved in " a baptism " in the apostolic age is complex. One striking omission in the passages cited for the different strands of practice is Acts 10.44-48 where baptism definitely follows the gift of the Holy Spirit and is given in recognition of it. The report accepts infant baptism but concedes that it cannot bear the whole weight of theological meaning which the New Testament places upon the initiation of adults. " We believe that there is a fulness of the power of the Holy Spirit within a baptised believer which can only be received after he has made deliberate and open confession of his personal adherence to Christ." Hence " the present day counterpart to the primitive initiation is not baptism alone, but baptism together with confirmation, followed by first communion ". While one admits the force of this where infant baptism is practised, the question arises in connexion with the baptism of adults, whether the baptism is sufficient initiation or whether it still needs to be completed with confirmation. The commission feels that it does, for " the local presbyter can baptise, but the baptism—in so far as it is incorporation into the Church—is further ratified by the ' apostolic man ' who represents the whole, as distinct from the local Church ". But does not this emphasis on confirmation seem to imply that baptism is not complete in itself but is as it were a half-sacrament?

The question of baptism is exercising the minds of many in the Church to-day. They may not go so far as Brunner when in *The Divine-Human Encounter* he says that the present practice of baptism is nothing short of scandalous, but a fresh study of our teaching and practice seems imperative. These two pamphlets provide a stimulating beginning for such a study.

William C. Bigwood

Die Taufiehre des Neuen Testaments. By Oscar Cullmann. Zwingli Verlag, Zürich.

Urchristentum und Gottesdienst. By Oscar Cullmann. Verlag von Heinrich Mayer, Basel.

The first book is a detailed examination of the New Testament baptismal teaching and practice. It is occasioned by the controversy about baptism which has arisen through Karl Barth's advocacy of adult baptism. Professor Cullmann admits that there is only very slight New Testament evidence for infant baptism. But there is none at all for the baptism of adults brought up in Christian homes. He is of the opinion that the best approach to the question is to find out whether the teaching about baptism found in the New Testament admits of infant baptism. He devotes his first chapter to developing the argument that baptism in the New Testament is closely associated with the vicarious suffering of Christ, as in Rom. 6.3 ff. In Jesus' own words (Mark 10.30, Luke 12.50) to be baptised is equivalent to dying, Professor Cullmann in a detailed exegesis interprets Jesus' own baptism as a call to fulfil the mission of the suffering Messiah of Isaiah 42.53. The fulfilment of this work, the atoning death, is the presupposition of Christian baptism. Professor Cullmann calls this the " general baptism " which Jesus underwent for all men. " It is entirely independent of the decision, faith and understanding of those who benefit by it. The baptismal grace based on it is in the fullest sense prevenient grace."

It is on the question of how the benefits of this deed are conveyed to believers that Cullmann differs from Barth. Barth holds that *cognitio salutis* is the essential thing in baptism, which of course is only possible in an adult. We have to realise the importance that the conception of the Body of Christ had in the worship of the early Church. Professor Cullmann, then, regards the ingrafting of the individual into the Body of Christ as the central element in baptism. There is New Testament evidence for this, but none for *cognitio salutis*. Children of believers were regarded as belonging to the Body of Christ, even without baptism, as we see from 1 Cor. 7.14. From this practice, and the idea of collective holiness behind it, a development seems possible in the direction of infant baptism.

Professor Cullmann goes on to consider the relation between faith and baptism. He points out that in those cases in the New Testament where a confession of faith is required before baptism, it is where Pagans or Jews coming into the Church are concerned. Elsewhere in the New Testament the faith that is essential is the faith that is a response to the act of ingrafting into the Body of Christ. In the next section Professor Cullmann deals with the relation

between baptism and circumcision which in the New Testament is used to illustrate the nature and effect of baptism. On the ground of this parallel he argues that infant baptism would be admissible. The final conclusion that Professor Cullmann comes to is that adult baptism is recorded of converted Jews and Pagans and that there are traces that indirectly suggest baptism of children. But the cardinal point is that infant baptism is in all respects agreeable with New Testament doctrine. Both of these books have an interesting and suggestive appendix on some traces of an old baptismal formula in the New Testament, based on the use of the verb κωλύειν in baptismal narratives.

The subject of the second of the books named above is worship in the primitive Church. The matter falls into two main parts. The first deals with the nature and elements of worship in the primitive Church. The second, by an examination of ten pericopes of the Fourth Gospel, seeks to determine to what extent an interest in worship has affected the choice and treatment of the material.

As regards worship, Professor Cullmann concludes that there was an early tendency towards stabilisation of worship at one place and on one day—a house, on the first day of the week. The basic elements of a service were preaching, prayer and the eucharistic meal. In addition there was always a manifestation of all or several of the spiritual gifts noted by Paul in 1 Cor. 12.14. The worship of the early church was of a rich and varied character. There was room for free utterance alongside of fixed liturgical forms. The aim of the service was the building up (οἰκοδομή) of the Body of Christ. The Church is to take shape as the Body of Christ in the meetings of the congregation. The Eucharist is the culminating point of the service, mediating the presence of the Lord which gives meaning to the whole and to each part of the service. It is worthy of note that Cullmann is of the opinion that in the earliest times the Eucharist was related to meals partaken with the Risen Lord (Acts 1.4, 10.41). The association with the Last Supper and the atoning death of Christ was due to Paul. The constitutive element in all early Christian worship is the presence and action of Christ among his assembled people.

In his exegesis of passages from the Fourth Gospel, Professor Cullmann points out that the topic of worship is given with the subject matter as in the pericopes relating to John the Baptist, the Cleansing of the Temple, or the woman at the Well of Samaria. The aim of the evangelist is to show that the Lord present with His worshipping people is identical with the historic Christ. Hence he always moves from a narrative of what Jesus did to a proclamation of the effectual presence of Christ in the sacraments which are the essence

of Christian worship. It has of course long been recognised that the Fourth Gospel has much sacramental teaching, but it is the merit of Professor Cullmann to have brought out the conception and shape of the early worship of the Church which underlies the Fourth Gospel and was common to the early Church generally. The sources that Professor Cullmann uses for this book are the New Testament writings and early Christian literature up to 150 A.D., particularly the *Didache*, Justin's *First Apology*, Ch. 67, and *Pliny's letter to Trajan* about the treatment of Christians.

Professor Cullmann writes with the clarity and power of one who has mastered his subject. Both books, though short, are full of suggestive matter. Full references are given for all points that are made, and yet amid all the detail of scholarship one never loses sight of the clear and unified outline of New Testament worship and teaching that Professor Cullmann presents. As a contribution to New Testament scholarship and to the discussion of present issues in Church life, both books are of first importance. It is a good thing to have the doctrine of baptism, which as compared with teaching about Communion, is somewhat neglected, so fully and competently discussed. These books help us to re-examine, as we ought, our conception of worship and of the sacrament in the light of the New Testament. It is very much to be desired that they should become available to a wide public.

JOHN C. CAMPBELL

The Kingship of Christ. By W. A. VISSER 'T HOOFT. S.C.M. Press. 4s.

DR. VISSER 'T HOOFT, Secretary of the World Council of Churches, has published his Stone Lectures recently delivered in Princeton. The theme is the Kingship of Christ, and Dr. Visser 't Hooft writes with his wonted power and conviction. The style is very readable; the temper, as one would expect, eminently ecumenical.

Chapter 1 recalls how the old Protestant doctrine of Christ as prophet, priest and king, which in the post-Schleiermacher era suffered serious eclipse, began to come into its own again between the Wars, and Christian theology rediscovered a long-forgotten watchword, " *Regem habemus*, and He reigns not over the Church only but over the whole world ". Chapter 2 relates how Barth, Brunner and others, returning in earnest to Biblical theology, forged the spiritual weapons which the Church in Germany, Norway and Holland was to use in its fight against totalitarianism. Chapter 3 expounds the kingship of Christ in the Bible. The faith of the earliest Church found expression in the formula, " Jesus is Lord "—a formula which, properly understood, implies a claim to cosmic

kingship. Since the Resurrection and Ascension we live in the dispensation of the Reign of Christ. This *Basileia* is not to be confounded with the *Basileia* of God. God's Reign, though it has been among us in Christ, will not be realised until the consummation. Yet, though the powers of evil are still " terribly aggressive " in our world, they are no longer on the throne of the universe. Defeated now in principle, they will be vanquished at the Return of Christ. Chapter 4 treats of the kingship of Christ in the Church. The new Israel created by Jesus is the People of God in the interim period between the coming of Christ and the consummation of the Kingdom. The Church to-day only really lives as it is in vital contact with its reigning Lord. Its role is to proclaim " the great deeds of God in Christ as witnessed to in the scriptures ". In time of conflict the Church rose to the height of its great role. Will it maintain its witness in the times of peace? Chapter 5 treats of Christ as the king not only of the Church but of the world. God has a cosmic plan, and the function of the Church is to confront the world with the question whether it owes allegiance to the Prince of this world or to the King of Kings. As its *kerygma* declares, " the Lord reigns ", its call is to preach Christ's Lordship at once to individuals and to communities.

This book will challenge and disturb the reader. It will tell him much about the spiritual issues in the time of the Church's struggle; it will introduce him to the most recent trends in European theology and to the work of Barth, Brunner, Cullmann, Schmidt and others; above all, it will recall him to the truth that Christ is now King not of the Church alone but of the world, and that it is the Church's duty to ring out this sovereignty *eukairos akairos*.

A. M. Hunter

The Church Service Society Annual, 1948.

Each year the Church Service Society's " Annual " is welcomed by a wide circle of readers drawn from within and without the Church of Scotland. This number is well up to standard.

There are two helpful articles of a practical nature. One is " The Hour of Holy Communion " by Dr. John Kilpatrick; the other is " The Anthem: its function and history " by Mr. Herrick Bunney. Dr. Kilpatrick argues that no reason can be found in the New Testament for fixing the hour of Holy Communion before noon, but that, since Christian Worship should stress the Resurrection, morning worship is natural and fitting, and that the Lord's Supper is best celebrated in the morning, any further administration

of Holy Communion later in the day being more fittingly made an extension of the earlier rite. In his concise account of the development of the Anthem in English and Scottish Worship, Mr. Bunney makes a convincing case for the need in our services of music, through which the worshipper can hold communion with God through listening, as well for music in which he is expected entirely to participate.

The Rev. W. S. Buchan's account of the restoration of St. Bride's Church, Sanquhar, will no doubt cause heart burnings among would-be restorers in these days of restrictions. Dr. William McMillan contributes an interesting historical article on Baptismal practice in Scotland in the early eighteenth century.

For the theologian the outstandingly important article is one by Dr. W. D. Maxwell on " Gregory Dix: The Shape of the Liturgy ". Dr. Maxwell examines the book from the viewpoint of Scottish readers, and his examination is most illuminating. He has some pointed criticisms to make of Gregory Dix's logic and serious misinterpretation of Calvin, to whom Dix attributes " receptionist " views, and a purely individualist and subjective view of participating in the Eucharist. One cannot but wish that Dix had learned from Calvin's writings just how high a view he did hold of sacramental grace. It is good to be reassured by Dix that the Scottish contention, that what is done—the Action—constitutes the valid rite, rather than the exact form of words or liturgy used. It now appears incontestable that later liturgies developed not from one Apostolic form of words, but from a fluid rite—in which there was universal agreement as to the content, but local differences as to the form.

A. K. Robertson

AMSTERDAM—WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS?

by The Rev. Professor J. L. M. HAIRE

Many of us rejoice that almost all the Churches of the world have been able to unite and form a World Council of Churches. Many others—and also many of those who rejoice—are a little puzzled. To-day Baptists and Quakers and Salvation Army leaders unite in worship and discussion with old Catholics and Eastern Orthodox. A century ago they tended to look at one another as dangerous heretics or even as allies of anti-Christ. We find ourselves asking: Are we to rejoice because the ancient animosities have been laid aside or are we to hesitate in the fear that all this has happened through lack of insight into the great differences which divide us? Has the Holy Spirit so changed men's hearts that they can unite or has the spirit of the world so invaded the Church that she can no longer distinguish between light and darkness?

On the one hand there is really a great deal to reassure us. (*a*) The great leaders in the renewal of theological interest on the Continent and in America were all at Amsterdam. Neither Barth nor Brunner nor Niebuhr for example held back. These men, about whose essential fidelity to Protestantism few would doubt, were ready to meet with Anglo-Catholic and Greek Orthodox. Barth who, despite his denial,[1] most people look on as "a first class fighting man" on the Protestant side, not only addressed the assembly but was one of the principal and most co-operative members of the Commission on that very disputable subject—the Nature of the Church. He not only showed himself an active member of the drafting Committee of the Section, but formed a firm friendship with Canon Ramsay of Durham who would be reckoned a High Church man. This general readiness to meet together did not mean that the High Anglican or Greek Orthodox view was not clearly expressed at Amsterdam. Father Florovsky of the Orthodox Church in Paris

[1] "I am by nature a gentle soul and entirely averse to all unnecessary disputes"—Preface to *Nein*.

could very clearly state the difference between his view and that of the Protestant majority, but he did not feel that for that reason he should not co-operate.

(*b*) But not only may we be reassured by the presence of these distinguished theologians. We have a second ground for confidence. The great men of the European resistance were both present and actively co-operating at Amsterdam. Martin Niemöller, Bishop Berggrav, Hendrick Kraemer are men about whose faith in God and whose evangelical zeal no normal Christian has any doubt. For them the coming together of the Churches was the will of God. They showed the belief expressed in the opening paragraph of the finding of the Commission on the Church: "We praise and thank God for a mighty work of His Holy Spirit, by which we have been drawn together to discover that, notwithstanding our division, we are one in Jesus Christ."

So much for our assurance—and there are considerable grounds for it. Must something be said on the other side also? For all human things tend to have two sides. Is it possible that weakness, loss of power in the world, have driven Christians together for mutual support? Might it be lack of faith in the power of God which impels them to seek strength in the united pressure they might bring to bear on governments? If these all too human motives are always showing themselves within the Churches, is it likely that they would not try to gain a place in the World Council of Churches? In fact, we may ask, was the Assembly sufficiently alive to this danger? To one person present it seemed more aware of the temptations in its path than most ecclesiastical assemblies, but who would dare say that in all things it was obedient to God?

If, therefore, there was a genuine coming together of the Churches at Amsterdam, and if at the same time the Assembly was also liable to the human temptation to set itself up as God, what are the implications? There seem to me to be principally two. (1) I believe that Amsterdam implies that the Churches have become aware of a neglected New Testament truth, are seeking to apply it, and are always in danger of misinterpreting it. The New Testament assumes the unity of the Church. Modern Protestantism has tended to assume that denominational divisions are the normal thing. St. Paul is, however, quite opposed to any such idea, when dealing with the threat-

ened schism at Corinth, while St. John speaks repeatedly in the seventeenth chapter of his Gospel of our Lord's prayer for the unity of His people. This New Testament conviction about the natural unity of the Church has been restated recently by a Continental writer on the Amsterdam Assembly who put the truth pointedly by saying: "Our Lord will ask us at the last day why we were not one flock on earth."[1] It was the great missionary movement of the nineteenth century and the subsequent experience of missionaries in a heathen environment which first brought home to the older Churches again this New Testament conviction that Christians should want to be one. And, in our own day, Hitler by reducing much of Europe to the same state, to a mission field, where Christians were again in a pagan environment, became God's instrument for bringing this desire for unity home even more forcibly to western Christendom. Thus missionary work in the East and in Europe has been one of the great factors behind the Ecumenical Movement.

This unity, however, is a unity created by the Holy Spirit. It can only be attained in obedience to the one Lord, and there is the constant danger than men and Churches will attempt to achieve it by themselves. The form which such unity will take must also be discovered under God's guidance and men are always tempted to reach it by compromises wholly of their own devising. When they do so, they unite without facing seriously the real theological differences which divide them, and this in turn can only lead to new divisions, when God makes clear to men in a Church so united errors which some will then reject and others seek for the sake of external unity to retain. True Churches can unite and false Churches can unite, but if the true unites with the false then either truth is abandoned or future strife is inevitable.[2] When, however, we say this, you and I must always remember that we ourselves may not be as capable of distinguishing the true from the false as we often think. Here too we need divine illumination. During the war some Churches which we had grown up to distrust bore a witness to Christ none of us could deny.

The Amsterdam Conference *was* aware both of the true Christian desire for unity and the dangers involved. The Com-

[1] Schlink, *Ecumenical Review*, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 153.
[2] See Barth, *Knowledge and Service of God*, pp. 166-7.

mission on the Church certainly sought to avoid any glossing over of the differences. It recognised that there were real agreements between all the Churches present—and yet even in stating these agreements there were two fundamental outlooks, two different emphases in every doctrine. This, the greatest difference, the Commission designated as the Catholic and the Protestant interpretation—pointing out that by Catholic something different was meant from Roman Catholic—a point to which we shall return. So there were disagreements within the agreements. But—and here was a hopeful sign—when members came to define their differences, they found, often to their surprise, that the differences themselves included points of agreement. Thus the Catholic stresses historical continuity in the Church, the Protestant the direct call of God and the individual's response in faith—but the Catholic side also believes in the need of faith, and the Protestant also holds that there is a need of continuity. Indeed in the discussions a very remarkable fact emerged, that when one Church tries to state the views of another Church, it generally caricatures the position of the other. A Greek Orthodox speaker would say, for example: "What I feel is unsatisfactory in the Protestant position is this" —and a Lutheran would immediately reply: "If what my Greek brother has outlined were the faith of Protestants, I would find myself in agreement with him." Thus there were also agreements within the disagreements. This has all remarkable implications. It means that all the Churches have to study afresh the New Testament doctrine of the Church, and to re-examine the teaching of the Fathers in the light of the New Testament, as they are given to understand it. They have to face seriously the criticisms of the other Churches—to say to themselves what Cromwell said to one of his Parliaments: "Consider it possible, gentlemen, that you may be mistaken." In doing this each Church will have to decide what its final authority is—will have to face its understanding of the meaning of "the Word of God"—will have to decide the relation of the Bible to Christian tradition. Amsterdam made the Churches aware of their need to rethink their doctrines of the Church. Will they fulfil their task? Will they submit themselves here to the living God? Are you and I as responsible members of the Church ready to do this?

The existence of the Roman Catholic Church raises in an extreme form this whole question of the conditions on which we may seek the unity of the Church, and the need of a true understanding of what the Church is. The Assembly and its commission on the Church manifested two distinct attitudes to the Roman Church. Those who were strongly Protestant were glad in one sense that there was no Cardinal at the table along with the other five Presidents. For them the Roman claim to infallibility excludes her from participating in conversations where every Church may learn from another. This claim appears to rob the Lord of the Church of His free power over her. For those within the Council on the Catholic side there is much that is true, as well as false, in the Roman Church's criticism of the Ecumenical Movement in 1928, when the Stockholm Conference appeared to be seeking Christian unity without any theological basis.[1] The truth of both types of criticism must be faced. The Churches must be open to God's Word to them, if they are to attain real unity; and in so far as any Church refuses to do this, true Churches will have to say "No" to her, however large or ancient she may be. The Churches also must ask how far the criticisms uttered by their fathers are real criticisms to-day.

Finally, in the desire of the Churches for unity, the World Council of Churches is primarily an instrument to bring the divided parts of the Church together. But every institution is tempted to perpetuate itself. The World Council should ultimately cease to be, that the Church may appear again as one. When and how that can happen God alone can say, but in all thinking about the unity of the Church those who seek to be God's instruments in bringing it about have to realise that they are instruments, and that their institution is a means, not an end in itself.

(2) To several writers Amsterdam seems to imply something else also.[2] The Assembly showed itself critical of the accepted solution of various world-wide problems. It was, for example, critical of both Marxist Communism and *laissez faire* Capitalism. It was critical both of the unwillingness of the older Chur-

[1] Schlink, loc. cit. p. 154.

[2] So Hartenstein in *International Review of Missions*, January 1949, and Principal William Robinson in a speech to the British Council of Churches at Edinburgh, March 1949.

ches to face reformation and the undue assurance of the younger Churches that they had already solved all the problems of Church division. It was critical of the claims of traditional Protestantism and of traditional Catholicism to have all truth. It took what might be called a *via media*—though this is probably the wrong metaphor. It was seeking to take a way not so much between the alternatives outlined above, but a third way, different from the other two in so far as it was a way to which God was pointing the Church to-day. Christians were being called to be, in Tertullian's phrase, a third race, a *tertium genus*, neither Jew nor Gentile, neither Communist nor Capitalist, neither worshippers of Catholic nor of Protestant traditionalism, but justified sinners seeking to do God's will in their own new situation.

Here again there seems to be true insight, and also the danger of distortion of two kinds. Christians are called to bear witness together to the Kingship of Christ in all realms of life, and so not to be wholly identified in principles with the ways of any civilisation or culture or party. Yet they are men called to share in the common life of mankind, as sinners with their brethren involved in the world's wrongs, though no longer in absolute and final bondage. So, while not deifying any human institution, they must generally co-operate with their fellows in the maintaining of governments and social institutions. Yet in playing their part as workers and citizens they must obey God rather than men. Amsterdam made this tension in the life of Christians clearer.

But because there are generally these two sides to a Christian's duty, he and the Christian Community of which he is a member are always tempted either to identify their social structure with the Kingdom of God or wholly to abandon their Society as evil, just when it needs them as the salt of the earth and the light of the world. The World Council of Churches is, therefore, always in danger of supporting some form of Society exclusively—just because the Churches know of the Christian's duty to State and Community. It is always in danger of identifying Western culture or democracy with the absolute will of God as if this itself were a third way between Communism and nineteenth century Capitalism. On the other hand a World Council of Churches will constantly be tempted, as the repre-

sentative of this third race, to speak no word at all, stand aside, draw back the hem of its garment from human societies, when their evil side is very manifest. It is in danger of fleeing from the threatened city at the very time, when its witness within the city, like Isaiah's, might be the means by which the rulers heard God speak to them.

But just because it is representative of so many lands, it has the means of more easily escaping the danger of identifying Christianity with any one culture. The delegates from Eastern Europe saved the First Assembly from an undue satisfaction with the Western way of life, and kept it to the third way. Equally the presence of delegates from the African communities in North America saved it from failing to protest against discrimination on the ground of colour within the Christian Church. These dangers, however, the World Council cannot escape satisfactorily, so long as it remains so middle class, so clerical, and so comparatively unrepresentative of the young Churches and of the women within the Church as Amsterdam was, and as even its Continuation Committee of ninety is. This, however, is a judgment rather on the present condition of most of the participating Churches than of the Assembly itself. The consciousness of this danger calls on us all to try more truly to seek the "third way", which is God's way, mindful of these real criticisms which the world can make of us.

REFLECTIONS OF AN ANGLICAN ON AMSTERDAM

by The Right Rev. K. C. H. WARNER

I REGARD it as a privilege to have been invited to write about the meeting of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam in the *Scottish Journal of Theology* which already in its short life has gained a widespread reputation by the high standard of the articles in it. I went to Amsterdam as the only delegate of the Episcopal Church in Scotland and was fortunate in having with me as alternate Canon N. J. Cockburn whose experience in ecumenical affairs is far greater than my own and to whom I am indebted for useful suggestions on certain points in this essay.

In seeking to record my reflections on Amsterdam I wish at the outset to state that what I have written is a personal view and in no way intended as an official expression of opinion on behalf of the Church in which I hold responsible office.

I must confess that at the beginning of the Assembly I felt as I can remember feeling long years ago when I first went to school. I was definitely a new boy, for I had never before been at a great interdenominational gathering of this kind. The other boys all seemed to know each other so well and to be full of schemes and plans which they had hatched last term and of which one of the breed called in my schooldays "novi" could know nothing. There were the great men of whom one had heard and read but never seen—J. R. Mott, Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Marc Boegner, Martin Niemöller, John A. Mackay, Reinhold Niebuhr, K. S. Latourette and many others.

But this first impression soon passed and was replaced by two others of a more fruitful and permanent kind. Of these the first and most vital was the awareness of an unbreakable bond between us all in our common allegiance to "our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour"; and the second the realisation that every Christian doctrine one held had to be re-examined and exposed to searching test.

A few of us were fortunate enough to reach Amsterdam in

time to travel to the outskirts of the city in trams and buses overflowing with friendly Dutch folk in holiday mood, to witness the hockey match between Holland and India. It was a keen hard-fought game which the Indian team won. But it seemed to me a parable of the Assembly which began next day with the great opening service in the Nieuwe Kerk. As the representatives of East and West met in friendly contest at the Sports Stadium, fought it out with great energy and with strict observance of the rules of the game and parted closer friends than before: so the delegates of one hundred and forty-seven Christian Churches—so different in race, history, dogma, and liturgical use—met together, faced their differences, argued them forcefully yet without loss of charity, and parted with a deepened sense of unity in Christ well expressed by one sentence of the Message of the Assembly—"We intend to stay together."

I remember that when I was an undergraduate I had an introduction to the late V. S. S. Coles, then Head of Pusey House, Oxford. He asked me to tea and I went with the misgivings of a young man who had few "ecclesiastical" contacts and was suspicious of what he thought he knew of the High Churchmanship represented by Pusey House. I found that this venerable old man had only one thing to say to me—namely that we must all find our unity in common loyalty to Jesus Christ. Nearly forty years later, I have found this restated at Amsterdam.

It is in face of that central truth—which is of course so obvious and for that very reason so generally forgotten—that the second realisation mentioned above is pressed upon us all. There is no disloyalty to the faith as each of us has received it, to re-examine each of its articles in the light of the rediscovery of this basic bond of unity in Christ. Yet it is an exacting, indeed a painful process, for we are all men who long to be loyal to the heritage committed to us; and we all also have our prejudices, our cherished preconceptions. It is to some reflections on this subject that I want to devote this article.

(1) If we are to grow together in knowledge of the Truth as it is in Jesus, we can only do so in proportion as all our thinking, conferring, arguing, is submitted to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. That means much prayer together. We must

learn first and foremost to wait upon God together. I think that this aspect of the matter was insufficiently emphasised at Amsterdam. There was incessant talk and too little prayer. Many of us longed for a quiet place to which to go aside for prayer. There was no chapel available at the Concertgebouw where the plenary sessions and big public meetings took place. The churches in Amsterdam—save for the Roman Catholic ones—appeared to be closed except for Sunday services. Here was a vital need unprovided for, as well as a failure to give the right spiritual balance by making such provision. It is true that each morning at nine there was a devotional service in the Koepelkerk conducted by different persons each day representing the different Confessions and Churches who are members of the Council. These were deeply sincere acts of devotion: and yet, for me at least, they mostly lacked the true note of "waiting upon God". An address was nearly always thought to be essential, and, with one or two notable exceptions, was the central feature of these services in the all too short time available for them.

(2) God works at His own speed not at ours. There were some who came to Amsterdam expecting spectacular things to happen. The phrase "a new Pentecost" has been heard in this connexion. I met one or two who seemed to feel that because they had travelled from distant parts of the world at great expense, it was almost unfair that they should have to return without the news that a new united Church had been born. In the event, there was a realism in the Assembly which dispelled any hopes of short cuts to unity. In the words of the Report of Section I ("The Universal Church in God's Design"), "It is in the light of that unity that we can face our deepest difference, still loving one another in Christ and walking by faith in Him alone. It has many forms and deep roots. . . Historically it has been described as the difference between 'Catholic' and 'Protestant', though we have learned to distrust any over-simple formula to describe it." The warning against oversimplification here is of great importance. For does not the deepest division of Christendom go back at least to the eleventh century, when two civilisations, an Eastern and a Western, began to fall apart? When the papal legates laid the sentence of excommunication upon the altar of St. Sophia at Constanti-

nople they said: "May God look upon it and judge". May it not be that in part at least the judgment of God upon the Great Schism is beginning to be seen more clearly in the twentieth century in that the only point at which the modern Ecumenical Movement has any contact with this basic rupture lies in the tension between Western Democracy and Eastern Communism? The Church of Rome and the Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate did not even confront one another at Amsterdam.

The so-called Catholic and Protestant division is a matter affecting the Western Church. It indicates the divorce between two fundamental elements in all religion—the Priestly and the Prophetic.

We Anglicans feel, with an almost overwhelming sense of responsibility, that our contribution to the Ecumenical Movement ought to be to bridge these two gulfs—that between East and West, and that between Catholic and Protestant.

With regard to the former, we possess an understanding of Orthodoxy and of Western Catholicism which is more sympathetic than that which obtains in other great Confessions. If I may be allowed to call in evidence a local witness to that statement, the shape of the Scottish Liturgy shows unmistakable Eastern characteristics side by side with the Western elements enshrined in the Book of Common Prayer.

With regard to the Catholic-Protestant, or rather the Priestly-Prophetic, division, we claim to hold in tension both these elements: to be at once Reformed and Catholic, Evangelical and Apostolic. Amsterdam made us feel that our particular mission in the Ecumenical Movement is to share as fully as possible our gift for balancing elements too often held in opposition. At the present moment practically all of us can come together in terms of our prophetic mission to proclaim the Gospel. We are, on the other hand, only tentatively confronting one another in terms of priesthood.

The Report of Section I has set a task to the constituent Churches which must occupy them for a long time. We await with hopefulness the Report of the Faith and Order Committee which is working on the general theological questions involved in reunion. It is understood that when this is available in a year or two, it will provide the Churches with fundamental

theological opinions not related to any particular scheme of reunion but for the guidance of the Churches in facing that problem as a whole.

(3) If Christ be our starting point, we must get back to the Bible as the summary of the tradition of the Church. By biblical study together, informed by the Holy Spirit as the result of our common praying, we need first to seek agreement on the nature of the Church. To me at least, Amsterdam was a revelation of the divergences of view about this. Surely it is starting at the wrong point to debate questions of episcopacy versus other ministries until we are agreed as to what are the functions of the ministry. That question in turn depends upon the view of the nature of the Church. And that in the ultimate issue is a question of Christology. By way of illustration of the point which I am trying to make, some of your readers may have noticed a letter in *Theology* of June 1949 by Dr. E. L. Mascall in which he suggests that "the ultimate division (about the ministry) is between those who look upon the Church in which and for which the ministry functions as being simply the Church militant here on earth and those who look upon it as consisting of all those who have been baptised into Christ, whether in this present world they be held still in the flesh, or, being delivered from the body, have passed into the world which is to come". If the Church Militant and the Church Triumphant are in fact one, then the Apostles with all other faithful departed are still in real relation with the Church on earth. Dr. Mascall's contention is that the Apostolate established by Christ is thus a permanent element in the Church, not because it existed in the first century, but because it exists now "in the Glory of Heaven". Thus ideas of Apostolic Succession which seem to refer merely to an earthly past must be corrected by seeing it "as the foundation of a real unity between the Church on earth and the Apostolate in heaven".

I value the meeting of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam principally as giving impetus to prayer and study on such lines as these between Christians of all denominations. This must be the first task of the Ecumenical Movement to which "action" must definitely take second place.

(4) The use of the word "Ecumenical" has been criticised in Anglican circles on the ground that it is only properly to be

used of the Universal Church, whereas there remains outside the World Council of Churches the whole of the largest Christian Communion and the greater part of another, besides a number of smaller bodies. It is also a word which is strange to the vocabulary of the ordinary man and that seems to me a stronger objection than the first. But since no one is able to suggest a better word, and it has been in use for a good many years in this context, we must accept it without further demur: reminding the purists that it does set before us the ideal of one household of God for the visible expression of which we strive: and explaining to the man in the street that it means "all of us together". But the man in the street is an impatient person. He does not set much store by our theological discussions and wants to see something done about "our unhappy divisions". He is, I think, to be distinguished in this from the man in the pew. Too many of the laity of all our Churches are as yet indifferent to the evil of disunion, while some actually think it is a good thing. However strongly I believe that prayer and study together is the first priority, yet there is here and now action to be undertaken together in the Lord's Name which can do much to arrest the attention of the man in the street and quicken the man in the pew.

(5) The Reports of Sections 3 and 4 of the Assembly give us a lead in this matter, for they point us to society and its disorders, and to international relationships and their problems. Both were faced in the light of our common understanding of God's purpose. It will be agreed that there is a wide gulf between the masses of the peoples of any country, including our own, and the worshipping Churches. In the minds of the average man and woman, both inside the Churches and without, there is no connexion of idea between Worship and Work. To the majority of regular worshippers religion is still far too much in a watertight compartment, and no serious attempt is made to relate it to daily life. The matter was put somewhat graphically to me recently by a clergyman who told me that he believed he had found one man in his congregation who really understood what Christianity was about. He said that this man had told him that though he was a confirmed member of the Episcopal Church he could not make his Communion because he worked in a woodyard where the opportunities for taking

home wood for his own use were so many that he could not resist the temptation to that kind of dishonesty. Much of our social and industrial trouble to-day arises from the fact that for most people work is an unavoidable evil to be got through, or round, as speedily as possible. Real living for them is to be in the times when work is over. Could not the Churches find a great common field of activity in seeking to make clear to the world that because man is made in the image of the Creator, and may claim sonship of God, all work is to be thought of as done in partnership with Him who made all things, and is to be offered deliberately to Him? The dignity of man lies in his calling to be a fellow labourer with God. But this offering of all work to God involves not only faithfulness in its performance but also deliberate acts of offering. Are we not to see such offering as an essential element in the Lord's Supper? At Amsterdam there were celebrations of the Lord's Supper according to the use of the several Confessions there represented. Whatever differences in use and emphasis there may have been, there was in all of them some manner in which bread and wine were deliberately and solemnly brought before the Lord and laid upon His Table. I understand that it has been the custom in many churches in Scotland on Communion Sunday for the elders to come into church in procession bringing bread and wine. I once attended High Mass in Milan Cathedral. There after the Creed several elderly men and women brought from the West End of the Cathedral loaves of bread and bottles of wine which were handed to ministers in the Sanctuary. In the Sarum rite, which in pre-reformation days obtained so widely both in Scotland and in England, there is the Great Entrance when the Eucharistic elements are solemnly brought in procession from a side chapel to the High Altar. Is there not here a common conception that when we obey our Lord's command: "Do this in remembrance of Me", the first stage in our obedience is the presenting to God symbols of the gifts of God to man and of the labour of man under God? The smallest piece of bread is the result of the labour of countless men and women, for there lies within it all the toil of the agricultural worker from the tending of the land to the reaping of the harvest. There lies in it the work of those engaged in the transport services, in milling, in baking, besides the labour of the office

worker and of those concerned with finance. We have an immense task in seeking to make this truth known. We must start by bringing it home to that small minority who frequent our churches and who alone can carry this attitude to life out to the farm, the factory, the mine, the office and the school.

(6) I suggest that many of our difficulties arise from a separation of the two commands most characteristic of Christianity, namely the command: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; and thy neighbour as thyself"; and the command: "Do this in remembrance of Me." We have largely failed to work out in common life what is involved in seeking to love one's neighbour as oneself. We have hesitated to accept the truth that it has to be worked out in all departments of life without exception. Family life, politics, economics, social organisation, are all spheres in which Christians must combine here and now in giving reality to the lip service we so often pay to the Christian doctrine of love. Much social reform and political faith has been inspired by genuine concern for the less fortunate and to that extent derives its driving force from Christianity. That is true for instance of the history of the Labour Movement in Great Britain. But the concern for the well-being of others has been separated from faith in God and the belief that only in His power can we fulfil our duty to our neighbour. This loss of faith in God must, in my belief, be connected with forgetfulness of the commandment: "Do this in remembrance of Me." Holy Communion, the Eucharist, Mass, whatever name is used, is the deliberate act whereby all that men have, and are, and do, is laid at the feet of God in love and adoration. Here Christ is acknowledged as the Lord of all life, and, by means of the humble gifts laid before Him, He unites those who bring them to Himself and to one another.

(7) It is stated in the Report of Section 3: "It is the responsibility of Christians to seek new creative solutions which never allow either justice or freedom to destroy one another." These words come at the end of the section dealing with Communism and Capitalism. In the next paragraph it is stated that "the greatest contribution that the Church can make to the renewal of society is for it to be renewed in its own life in faith and obedience to its Lord. Such inner renewal includes a clear

grasp of the meaning of the Gospel for the whole life of men." It is common ground between all the Churches that we cannot be committed to a negative anti-communist campaign. I have heard it said by a leading trade unionist that the choice for the Church to-day is between acceptance and support of the British Socialist Party under whose regime the Church will be allowed to do its work, or Communism under which the Church will ultimately be suppressed. We cannot accept this dilemma. Whatever may be said about the controversy which took place at Amsterdam, both publicly and behind the scenes, between those who believe that it is possible for Christians to co-operate with a Communist regime and those who, like the Norwegians, regard such co-operation as comparable with the action of Quisling, let us be clear that the call to Christendom to-day is to work out, and strive for, a social order which because it is Christian is superior to any of those the world has yet seen. I believe that in this direction we ought here and now to be able to work far more closely together than we are yet doing, and that without any sacrifice of the theological principles about which we are yet divided.

(8) In one sense the symbol of our separation was the fact of the several Eucharists at Amsterdam. Each Confession obeyed the Lord's command in its different ways. Some considered that we should have had no Eucharist as we cannot unite at the Lord's Table. I cannot take that view, but rather believe that each Eucharist is the liturgical summary of the contribution which each Confession has to make. Unity will come when all these contributions are drawn into one. The fellowship meal of the Reformed, the hidden mystery of the Orthodox, the pleading of the one sacrifice of the Anglicans, these are just some of the elements which must find their place in the Ecumenical Church which is to be.

CONCERNING AMSTERDAM

I

THE NATURE AND MISSION OF THE CHURCH

A Discussion of Vols. I and II of the Preparatory Studies[1]

by The Rev. T. F. TORRANCE

The *Universal Church in God's Design*, and *The Church's Witness to God's Design*, the first two volumes written in preparation for the meeting of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam, are an ecumenical event in themselves. They form the most significant attempt at combined thinking about the nature and mission of the Church that has yet taken place. The stage is now set for a fresh and exhaustive inquiry behind the present divisions among the Churches into a Biblical and Christological doctrine of the Church which may yet knit into a theological unity the agreement of the Churches reached at Amsterdam. After all "the only valid argument for the union of the Churches is theological, a belief that unity is the will of God for His Church, and that the Church as the Body of Christ ought to represent on earth the mysterious unity of the Godhead" (Vol. II, p. 202). The purpose of this essay is not so much to review the actual material presented in these volumes as to face the questions they raise and, if possible, to point the discussion further along the road to that theological unity.

We are confronted at the very outset with the fact that the pressure for visible unity, for a recatholicisation of the Churches, has not come so much from the professedly "catholic" sections of the Church as from the "evangelical" movements burdened with fulfilling the mission of the Gospel to the whole world.[2] The great impetus in the Ecumenical Movement has been

[1] Four Volumes of Studies prepared for the First General Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam, August 22 to September 4, 1948, and the Official Report edited by W. A. Visser 't Hooft. S.C.M. Press. 12s. 6d. each volume.

[2] "Catholic" and "evangelical" are used here and throughout as in the Amsterdam Report, p. 52.

decidedly missionary. That is not to say that evangelical experience and action have taken precedence over theological conviction, for side by side with this evangelism and at the very heart of its obedience to Christ there is going on a renewal of the great convictions of the faith such as we have not seen since the Reformation. It is just here in evangelism, as Oliver Tomkins says, that doctrine and practice meet (I, p. 135). Nevertheless these have yet to be integrated at the ecumenical level. That means on the one hand that "the problem of the Church's world mission is the crisis of the Ecumenical Movement. If an Ecumenical Movement is not primarily a strategy of world-wide evangelism, then it is nothing but an interesting academic exercise" (II, p. 116). On the other hand it means that "there is still in much of our ecumenism a strong element of relativism and of lack of concern for the truth of God" (Visser 't Hooft, I, p. 183). Nevertheless the hope of the situation is that "the Church in the churches insists on asserting itself. Wherever two or three are gathered together, the Una Sancta is in the midst of them and demands to be manifested" (I, p. 185). When that happens as it did at Amsterdam there are signs that something new is about to take place, especially when it is evidently accompanied by the overmastering conviction that Christ far transcends all our theological formulations and that there is an essential unity of the one flock of Christ in spite of the disobedience and failures of the historical Churches.

If therefore theological unity at the ecumenical level seems to lag behind actual fellowship in the evangel that may not mean a lack of reflection but rather that the wholeness of Christ and the given unity of His Church press so heavily upon the sundered Churches in the hour of their coming together and renewal that they are thrown into a divine uncertainty about traditional formulations of the faith, and cannot use them in order to express the essential unity of the faith. In other words it is precisely the unity of the Church in Christ Jesus conceived as an eschatological reality that both interpenetrates history and transcends it, as a given unity even in the midst of disorder and as a promised unity beyond it, that has brought the Churches together as far as Amsterdam and yet has prevented them from snatching too hastily at a visible unity.

That such a stage has been reached is of the greatest signifi-

cance. The persistent difficulty has been that from each side of a fundamental division, such as that between "catholic" and "evangelical", people see the Christian faith and life as a self-consistent whole, while the two conceptions of the whole are actually inconsistent with each other. If the realisation of the given unity is strong enough, however, it will surely entail an eschatological suspension of the confessionalism behind these conceptions of the whole, and at the same time mean a shattering of theological relativism. Then room will be created among the Churches for ecumenical thinking in the proper sense—that is to say for a corporate thinking "with all saints" of the breadth, length, depth and height of the love of Christ which passes knowledge through which the Churches may reach out to be filled with all the fullness of God in Christ. Ecumenical thinking might well be described as *Eucharistic thinking*, not that primarily in which we offer of our own traditions and efforts toward a common pool, but an ever-new and thankful *receiving together* of the Body of Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 14.5 and Eph. 4.12-16) "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that speaking the truth in love we may grow up unto Him in all things who is the head, even Christ."

The thought of the Eucharist is not of the labour of our hands in producing the bread and bringing it to the altar—that would be the sacrifice of Cain—but of receiving the one Body given and broken for us. It is the thought of one loaf broken into a multiplicity of fragments of which we partake, and yet partake in such a way that we are incorporated in the unity of the one Body. In the receiving of this one sacrifice and its unity into our multiplicity healing is given for our divisions. Nevertheless it is an eschatological unity which we shall only receive fully when the sacrament yields place to the marriage supper of the Lamb in the final consummation of the mystery concerning Christ and His Church. Until He come we receive that only sacramentally in the tension of the Cross, holding together the unity of the visible and the invisible, the material and the spiritual, the temporal and the eternal, by faith, but still waiting for the redemption of the body in the resurrection. This unity cannot therefore be perpetuated in the structure of space

and time, any more than the transfigured Christ or the Christ of Emmaeus can be constrained to perpetual abiding in an earthly tabernacle or institution. He is, so to speak, the vanishing Christ who must be received again and ever again in the Eucharist and shewed forth in His death until He come in glory. As often therefore as the Church partakes of the Eucharist she receives judgment upon her multiplicity and divisions, and receives too the earnest of the unity that shall be and that already is. The experience of the Church cannot be anything else therefore but "as dying, and behold we live; as having nothing and yet possessing all things" (2 Cor. 6.9, 10). The fact that we have sacraments in the Church means that unity is hidden with Christ in God, and yet that we are given participation in this unity as we receive the Word and the Body of Christ in the Gospel and Sacraments.

The full thought of the Eucharist and of the eschatological unity or wholeness which it mediates bears several important implications for ecumenical thinking.

(1) If the given unity of the Church is essentially eschatological then the validity of all that she does is conditioned by the *Parousia* and cannot be made to repose upon any primitive structure of unity already complete in the naturally historical realm or upon any continuity in the fallen world out of which we are redeemed. "Like the Incarnation itself, the Eucharist is the breaking into history of something eternal, beyond history, inapprehensible in terms of history alone" (Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 107). So we must think of the validity of the Church's ministry, of her councils and theological formulations, not in terms of history alone but in terms of a divine act which entails the eschatological suspension of all earthly validity. The Church is a divine reality and cannot be demonstrated as a divine reality in the actuality of history except by a divine act. "At no time and no place is the Church an authority which upholds itself out of itself" (Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*, p. 146). To the divine authority the Church can only bear witness by word and obedience and must never cite it after the fashion of the Scribes and Pharisees (II, p. 22). It is understandable that when the early Church was faced with the dangers of gnosticism that it should appeal to an actual succession of bishops to attest the historicity of its claims, a

function which is much better performed to-day by historical criticism, but it is a complete misunderstanding to transmute linear or chronological sequence into a theological principle. Nor on the other hand can a tactual succession of bishops be made to usurp the function of Baptism which is the supreme eschatological act whereby we are initiated into the once and for all historical events in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (cf. Gaugler, *Römerbrief*, 1, p. 154 f.). The very existence of sacraments in the heart of the Church ought to have protected her from this misunderstanding, inasmuch as the validity of our salvation, of our ministry, and of our faith is by baptism made to rest upon the unrepeatable events of Jesus Christ on the one hand, and yet thrown into the future by the Eucharist on the other hand. True sacramental thinking entails an entirely different conception of validity from worldly or historical validity, for it is validity which is an act of God which we must receive sacramentally ever and ever again, and not a validity reposing upon the very thing that the sacraments are designed to transcend. The extraordinary thing is that because of episcopal succession the validity of baptism has been distinguished in sort from the validity of the Eucharist to the misconception of the latter. While the Eucharist is above all the sacrament in which we receive wholeness into our earthly tensions, designed as the medicine for our sinful divisions, it has been made to rest so much for its validity upon chronological sequence within history that it has actually become the great obstacle to unity among the Churches. Nothing could be more destructive of the real Eucharist than to make it separatist.

(2) If the given unity of the Church is essentially eschatological then there is ultimately no self-consistent whole in any historical tradition. Therefore it becomes the duty of each Church in the ecumenical fellowship to listen to the witness of other Churches, or as Dr. Visser 't Hooft has put it, to open herself to the truth of God that she may learn from them, and to be ready to let her own faith and life be enriched and corrected by this contact. "Churches cannot treat each other as if they were sovereign states which defend the integrity of their rights and territory. They must on the contrary rejoice when the ecumenical situation leads to constructive battles and bene-

ficial invasions. The members of the one ecumenical family cannot adopt the principles of non-intervention. They let themselves be questioned by their fellow-members. They exhort each other to greater faithfulness and renewal of life. They call each other back to the Apostolic witness" (I, p. 192; cf. Skysgaard, p. 165). That is indeed the great hope of the situation, that before one another the Churches have been driven back to the Biblical witness and Biblical theology, and that more and more there is taking place a subordination of tradition to Scripture. That even applies to the Roman Church, for example, in her rediscovery of the notion of the Church as the Body of Christ and of the eschatological element in the Eucharist (cf. I, p. 116, 163, 171). Apart from the wide-spread revival in Biblical studies and the new readiness of all branches of the Church to place themselves under the criticism of the Word, Amsterdam would hardly have been possible.

(3) In the light of the essential and given unity of faith it becomes the duty of the Churches in the ecumenical fellowship to think out every doctrine into every other doctrine. It is only thus that they will reach back to the most ultimate truths and put to a Christian test even their doctrine of God (cf. F. W. Camfield, *S.J.T.*, 1.2, p. 205). There can be no doubt that such exhaustive theological work, particularly in the English-speaking world, is greatly needed if we are to get behind the secondary questions which are the immediate cause of our divisions. The coming together of the different Churches in constructive and mutual challenge has made it very clear that different doctrines in different traditions have suffered from arrested thinking and consequent distortion. Thus, for example, eschatology has been so thrust into the background again and again that in differing degrees in the different Churches almost all doctrines have suffered accordingly. Now that eschatology is being thought into the other doctrines of the faith bringing them nearer to the promised unity in Christ, great differences are beginning to disappear. That is very apparent in the contribution of Professor Florovsky on the Nature and Task of the Church This is a doctrine which has never received dogmatic definition in any of the great councils of the Church and has suffered perhaps more than most, particularly from a failure to receive Christological correction. Indeed it was pre-

cisely at this point at the Reformation that the Roman Church remained behind and separated from the Reformed Church which insisted on Christological correction of the doctrines of the Church, the Sacraments, and the Ministry. There are signs, however, as Professor Skysgaard has pointed out so well, that "a new attentiveness is awakening, an inner investigation, a self-criticism, not of the Church as such, but of the exact form which the Roman Catholic Church has taken in the course of its empirical development, in which restrictions and prejudices have occurred, so that truly Catholic thought (which in this connexion means the whole and undivided Christian truth) has had an incomplete development" (I, p. 166). On the other hand, if the doctrines of Christ and the Church have themselves suffered from arrested development in the Reformed Churches, that is undoubtedly due to the failure to think eschatology into the whole. Nevertheless it is the great hope of the present, manifest everywhere in the Amsterdam reports, even in regard to the Church of Rome, that these three doctrines are being brought to bear upon each other from their Biblical foundations and in such a way as to raise in our breasts the expectation that the hidden unity behind the Churches may at last spring into view (cf. I, p. 168). "It is only the unity which exists that makes possible the exploration of our differences. It is only the unity which we believe that God has already given which affords hope that the honest search for biblical truth will, not create unity, but more and more reveal it" (I, p. 17).

It is highly significant that Karl Barth who more than any other in modern times has thrust the doctrine of the Church into the forefront of our thinking, was the one to suggest the procedure for discussion at Amsterdam: to examine agreements to discover what disagreements they contain, and then to examine disagreements to uncover their concealed agreements. The outstanding fact this brought to light was that disagreements were but differences within a total unity, a unity which was both given and had somehow become *event* (*Ereignis*) in the midst of the Assembly—one of those ever-new acts of the Church's Lord about which Barth had written as creative of the Church (I, p. 67 ff.). Nevertheless the differences were wide enough and were apt to become entrenched behind the historical division between "catholic" and "evangelical", more

so in the discussion itself than in the volumes written in preparation for the Council. This entrenchment, although it brings to the surface in an honest and clear light the differences that must be faced, will nevertheless mean the ultimate failure of the World Council, unless the Churches themselves undertake to take up the agreements within the total unity, and push them through the whole region of their disagreements until there is no difference left of such a magnitude as to inhibit a confessional unity. In the rest of this essay we must face some of these agreements and disagreements as they concern the nature and mission of the Church.

1. *The Nature of the Church*

All were agreed that the Church is God's gift to men for the salvation of the world; that the saving acts of God in Jesus Christ brought the Church into being; that the Church persists in continuity throughout history through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit (V, p. 53; I, p. 213). The differences that arose within this agreement were considerable, but might not have been so great had some of the ultimate problems been faced. What is meant, for example, by the divine nature of the Church? How are we to think of the divine and human elements in relation to each other? To that question only a Christological answer can be given, and yet there seems to have been no real attempt to think out the relation between the divine and human natures of the Church in terms of the relation between the divine and the human in Jesus Christ Himself. It will readily be agreed that we cannot think of the divine nature of the Church in the same way as we think of the divine nature of Christ, for in Him the union of God and Man is absolutely unique. And yet it is only on the analogy of the hypostatic union that we can begin to answer our question—that is by giving that relation an analogical extension into the sphere of the Church. The analogy runs not "as God and Man are related in Christ so the divine and the human are related in the Church", but rather "as God and Man are related in Christ so Christ and the Church are related". "This is a great mystery", but it is failure to give this adequate thought that has often led some of the Anglican group to speak of the Church as if she were a *pre-existent* ontological reality, and has often led

the Orthodox group to think of the Church as if there were over against the visible Church an invisible Platonic magnitude (cf. Dr. Germanos, V, p. 59—the very thing which Florovsky tries to avoid in his eschatological conception of the Church!). Behind this there also lies a failure to think out the relation between the Church and creation, both the original creation and the new creation, which is so integral to the Pauline doctrine in Ephesians and Colossians. In other words the eschatological tension tends to be conceived in terms of eternity and time or transmuted into a mystical relation, instead of being thought of in terms of the new creation and the old. The New Testament knows of no Church, even in its divine reality, except in its earthly actuality (cf. Schlink, *Ecumenical Review*, 1, 2, p. 159. Contrast Florovsky, 1, p. 46 f.).

It is clear therefore that a great deal more work must be done upon the Pauline doctrine of the Church as the Body of Christ before prevailing confusions are cleared up. The "catholic" theologians will have to ask whether there is any warrant at all in the New Testament for thinking of the Body of Christ as *corpus mysticum*. Certainly the word for body (*σῶμα*) is never used in this way in the Epistles of St. Paul.

Two aspects in particular seem to demand attention.

(*A*) What is the relation between the spiritual body (*σῶμα πνευματικόν*) and the natural body (*σῶμα ψυχικόν*), or the celestial body (*σῶμα ἐπουράνιον*) and the terrestrial body (*σῶμα ἐπιγείον*), or our vile body (*σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως*) and that which will be made like unto His glorious body (*σῶμα τῆς δόξης*)? If it is the spiritual or celestial body that bears the image of the heavenly (*εἰκὼν τοῦ ἐπουρανίου*) can we claim for the natural body anything more, as far as we can *see*, than that it bears the image of the earthly (*εἰκὼν τοῦ χοϊκοῦ*)? In what sense then may we speak of the believer or the Church as bearing already the image of the heavenly? If it is part of the dying and rising of the Church as the Body of Christ not to be conformed to the fashion of this world (*μὴ συσχηματίζεσθε τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ*) but to be transformed by the renewing of her mind, can we ever say that in her outward and historical form as we know it in a fallen world (*τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου*) the Church bears the essential structure of a God-given catholicity? "If it is the Body of Christ no outward forms can guarantee the Church's

presence" (C. T. Craig, I, p. 41). Structure there is indeed but in the unity of the Spirit (*ἑνότης τοῦ Πνεύματος*) which is also the eschatological goal of the Church. If we are really in earnest about thinking of the Church in this fallen world as the Body of Christ (and surely we ought to be) must we not think of her as in the form of Christ's humiliation (*μορφὴ δούλου*)? And is it not of the very essence of sin to transubstantiate this form (*μορφή*) into that other form (*εἶδος*—cf. *διὰ πίστεως, οὐ διὰ εἴδους*, 2 Cor. 5.7) which is to make of the Church an idol (*εἴδωλον*—cf. 2 Cor. 6.16)? Surely the essential form of the visible Church wherein she images her Lord is to be found in her humble service in which the great reconciliation already wrought out in the Body of Christ is lived out among men, and the Church in life and action becomes, as it were, sacramentally correlative to the life and passion of Jesus Christ. It is not only as she receives the sacrament but as she enacts it, always bearing about in her body the dying of Jesus (*πάντοτε τὴν νέκρωσιν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι περιφέροντες*—2 Cor. 4.10), resisting unto blood (Heb. 12.4), that she knows Christ in the fellowship of His sufferings and becomes conformable unto His death. It is thus that she fills up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, and thus that she shews forth His death till He come. It is not therefore in any worldly structure or in any hierarchy conceived as belonging to the *esse* of the Church that the Form of the Church imaging the Form of Christ will be seen, certainly in no order in which "a community of the clergy claim, or permit themselves to receive, a position in the Church which separates them from lay orders" (I, p. 83; that applies quite as much to Presbyterianism as to Anglicanism!), but rather in the order in which there is only one Master and all others are servants, and in which each esteems the other better than himself and edifies the other in love. Whenever we speak of any structure or form as belonging to the *esse* of the Church, must we not go on to add that this very structure and this very form will therefore be preserved when heaven and earth pass away and the new heaven and new earth will be revealed? If we have no authority for holding that such a structure or form belongs to the Church as the final eschatological and ontological reality, have we any right to say it belongs to the *esse* of the Church? Must it not be related as *shadow* (*σκιά*) to the *Body* of Christ

(σῶμα—Col. 2.17, 18)? Certainly the book of Revelation mentions a heavenly Presbytery ("four and twenty Elders") whereas it mentions no heavenly Episcopate! The Prophets and the Apostles remain on in the new heaven and new earth, but not the so-called hierarchy. The last chapters of the Apocalypse make it quite clear that in the New Jerusalem there will be no temple and no creaturely ministry of light, for the Lord God and the Lamb are the Temple and the Light thereof, and even the Eucharist disappears before the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. At last the forms and fashions of this world which the Church must use but not abuse (*χρώμενοι τὸν κόσμον ὡς μὴ καταχρώμενοι*—1 Cor. 7.31) will have passed away (*παράγειν*), and the essential structure of the new creation will be revealed. Of course it is difficult indeed to draw dogmatic concepts out of the Apocalypse, and perhaps not justifiable, but it seems clear nevertheless that the more we think the Biblical eschatology into the doctrine of the Church, the more our differences will tend to disappear, though doubtless not without great heart-searching in our several traditions.

(*B*) The other aspect of the doctrine of the Church as the Body of Christ that demands more intensive discussion is the fact that Christ is the *Head* of the Church which is His Body. This may be the point where we can transcend the antithesis between the "catholic" emphasis upon the visible continuity of the Church as a body in space and time and the "evangelical" emphasis upon the continuity as the enduring eschatological event taking place in Word and Sacrament. Professor Florovsky's statement that "only in the sacraments does the Christian community pass beyond the purely human measure and become the Church" (I, p. 47) seems to point in this direction. The way in which Professor Hodgson has put the contrast (V, p. 60) is too sharp and does not appear to understand the "evangelical" insistence on the visible continuity of the Church in history. Calvin also taught that "those to whom God is Father the Church must also be a mother" (*Inst.* 4.1.1.); and indeed that it belongs to the essential structure of the Church that "God has deposited the doctrine of eternal life and salvation with men, that by their hands He might communicate it to others" (*Inst.* 4.3.1). "If the ministry is removed the whole edifice must fall" (*Inst.* 4.1.11). But "at no period since the

world began has the Lord been without His Church, nor ever shall be till the final consummation of all things" (*Inst.* 4.1.7). The difference does not lie therefore in a doctrine of an essential historical continuity but in the form and nature of that continuity.

It must be admitted that both Roman Catholic mysticism and Protestant philosophical theology have tended to cut faith adrift from the particularity of history—but that is to sin against the Incarnation. Now that the Word has become flesh, "the Absolute Fact is also historical fact" (Kierkegaard, *Phil. Fragments*, p. 84), a fact in the same sphere of reality as we are ourselves. God's Word has become indissolubly bound to a human and historical form such that there is no Word of God for us apart from a physical event. Therefore no doctrine of the Church based on a timeless confrontation by the Word analogous to some eternal generation of the Son can be permitted, for the Church must involve in her structure and motion the very time-relations that are involved by the Word in the birth of Jesus, and in the physical death on the Cross. To cut the link between the Church and historical particularity is not only to transubstantiate the Church into some docetic *corpus mysticum* but to sever her from any saving act by God in our actual existence. And so we must say that just as the Word assumed human form in history, though without ceasing to be eternal, the same Word also assumes temporal form in the Church analogous on her level to the incarnational form in Christ. As the Word of God became irrevocably involved with a physical event, so in the Church the same Word is involved in a physical event. In other language the Church extends the corporeality of the Word and mediates it to a corporeal world through such physical events as the Bible, Preaching, the Sacraments, etc., and the physical society of those who belong to the Church. At the same time these physical events have meaning for the Church only in their sacramental character, that is, only as in and through them it is the living Christ Himself who speaks, communicates His Body and Blood, and bestows His Spirit. The important fact that concerns us at the moment however is that in His institution God designs that His Word comes to us, creating out of the world His Church, only in such a way as to entail time relations, and yet because it never ceases to

be eternal in such a way as never to be lost within the contingencies of history. God has ordained that we receive His Word through the historical communication of other men, so that the communication of the Word and the growth of the Church as a historical community are mutually correlative. As this historical actuality and concrete community the Church is the Temple of God on earth. That is the reformed doctrine of the essentially historical continuity of the visible Church. It is a doctrine which finds the essential historical continuity in the *whole Body* (*πᾶν τὸ σῶμα συναρμολογούμενον*) and not in a hierarchical line of priests.

It is thus that the true ministry, as the New Testament views it, is maintained and preserved in the Church. On the one hand it is grounded in a bodily and personal and historical continuity with the Apostolic foundation, but on the other hand it is that divinely appointed service whereby room is created within the historical continuum for the ever-new breaking in of the Creative Word of the living Christ whereby from age to age a Christian community is continuously called into being and sacramentally gathered up by incorporation into Christ. The ministry is a failure or is not the true ministry if by it the Word of God is bound by the traditions of men or made of none effect (Mark 7.1 ff.; Matt. 15.1 ff.; 23.15 ff.). This is surely the prime reason for the existence of sects, the protest against a hardening of the ministry which binds the Word of God to the traditions of men. To be truly catholic therefore the Church must see to it that the Word of God is not bound, that her Church-order makes room for the living new creation which is continuous through Word and Sacrament with the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. "The task and significance of Church-order consists in so uniting the congregation on the human level that it is rendered as free as possible for all that the Lord Himself can, and will do in her" (Barth, I. p. 73). By the ministry rooted and grounded in the whole body of the Church, the Church lives on continuously in history, but she lives on in history by such a series of ever-new acts of quickening and repentance that in spite of the hardening of history and tradition and its sinful repetition of past actions (cf. Richard Niebuhr, I, p. 79 f.) room is made for the charismatic ministry of the Spirit. The greatest danger of the Church therefore lies in such

a historical series of acts as to entrap the charismatic ministry and confine it to a hierarchical line of priests. What kind of governance of history does that imply? What view of God does that entail? To commit God to a series of acts in the relativity of history, which even He cannot abrogate, seems to mean a view of God that we do not get from the Christ who died and rose again and ever lives in the midst of the Church as her only Lord and Master. It would mean a Church in which the Body is not governed by the Head but the Head is governed by the Body. That is the perpetual danger not only of Churches in the "catholic" group but also of the Presbyterian type who too readily develop a secularised ecclesiasticism which brings derangement into their orders and stands in the path of renewal and unity. How easy it is by an act of General Assembly to make the Word of none effect! But here at least there is some understanding of the sovereignty of the Word which makes it clear that Church order is never an end in itself but exists for the sole purpose of serving the *Kerygma* or rather Christ Himself.

It was evident at Amsterdam, as has long been evident in discussion with High Anglicans, that there is a manifest failure to appreciate the New Testament meaning of *Kerygma* as both the *thing preached* and the *preaching* of it in one (cf. Newbigin, II, p. 21). It is such preaching that the "thing preached", Christ Himself, crucified and risen, encounters men personally and acts upon them creatively. It is such preaching that men are actually arrested and addressed by Christ in His living Body as St. Paul was on the road to Damascus—though his experience had a fullness which was the exclusive experience of an Apostle. It is such preaching that in it Jesus continues to do and to teach (Acts 1.1) what He had already begun before and after the Crucifixion. It is done through the weakness of men and human words, but nevertheless in demonstration of the Spirit and of Power (1 Cor. 2.4), and is designed to emphasise the weakness of the earthen vessel in order that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of men, and that faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God (2 Cor. 4.7; 1 Cor. 2.5). In other words just as in the Incarnation the Word was made flesh, so in *Kerygma* that same Word continues to be made flesh. That is why the

Kerygma and Baptism, followed by the Eucharist, always go together. In *Kerygma* it is the *Word* made flesh; in the sacrament it is the Word made *flesh*. But apart from the Word there is no sacrament, for it is the living Word and nothing else that is made flesh (John 6.63); while apart from the sacrament the *Kerygma* as act of the living Christ does not reach its proper fulfilment. The full consummation of the act is eschatological, but until Christ come, the sacrament holds together in one here and now the "*Son thy sins be forgiven thee*", and ("that ye may know that the Son of man hath power *on earth* to forgive sins") the "*Arise take up thy bed and walk*" (Mark 2.5, 10, 11). As long as we still wait for the redemption of the body we have the sacraments, for it is the redemption of an already purchased possession that we wait for. Although considered in terms of temporal sequence (cf. Mark 2.5 ff.) there is a teleological suspension of the union between Word and Act, that union is given to us here and now in Word and Sacrament as a finished work (τετέλεσται—John 19.30; cf. ἐτελέσθη τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ θεοῦ—Rev. 10.7; cf. 16, 17). The *Parousia* therefore will mean not so much the final consummation of the act in terms of linear time (though it must also mean that—cf. Cullmann, *Christus u. die Zeit*), as the unveiling of a new creation which already in Christ is reality.

All this lies behind the meaning of the New Testament *Kerygma* as itself in the highest sense sacramental act, for it is the living Word behind the witness of the Church which sacramentalises, so to speak, water and bread and wine in Baptism and Eucharist. It is to preaching in this sense that men are ordained by a divine institution in the Church. It is "a *de fide* doctrine of the ministry *iure divino*" (Professor J. H. S. Burleigh, *S.J.T.* 1.2, p. 184). It is failure to understand this view of the preaching of the Word that characterises a great deal of "catholic" and particularly Anglican thought. By "Word" "evangelical" teaching means precisely the living Christ who is the *Head* of the Church which is His Body (cf. Aulen, I, pp. 20, 23), and it would seem that a fuller understanding of the relation between the *Head* and the *Body* would clear away much of the confusion. Just as a body is gathered up into a head without which the body is nothing, so the Church is by the Word (the Mind of Christ—νοῦς Χριστοῦ) gathered up as His Body in

Christ the Head (Eph. 1.10—*ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι*; cf. Rom. 13.9: *ἐν τούτῳ τῷ λόγῳ ἀνακεφαλαιοῦται*). Or to put it the other way round, it is through the work of the ministry, through knowledge of the Son of God and speaking the truth in love, that the Church grows up into Christ in all things who is the Head of the Body (Eph. 4.12 f.). Thus the "gathering up" and "incorporation" are indissolubly related and are indeed of one and the same act, for it is Christ who by Word and Sacrament does both. They take place in mutual involution. It is precisely in this mutual involution that the on-going and enduring event (*Ereignis*) takes place which is dynamically constitutive of the Church (Barth, I, p. 67 ff.). Apart from the Word or the "gathering up", which lies behind the "gathering together" of the congregation, there is no event of "incorporation". On the other hand, apart from the "incorporation" the "gathering up" does not really become event, no matter how much "gathering together" there may be. It is thus that Professor Barth brings together "event" and "unification" (I, p. 72 f.) both of which presuppose "incorporation" (*Einverleibung*), though this aspect does not come out strongly enough in his essay.

All this has further implications for a doctrine of the ministry, for it means that any real distinction between what are called the "episcopal" and "prophetic" functions of the ministry entails a serious disorder, namely, the sundering of "incorporation" from "gathering up" into the Head. Such a disorder really means that in the end the "incorporation" becomes a profane event in which the living presence of Christ is displaced by a historical juridical succession (cf. Barth, *Dogmatics*, 1.1, p. 109). This difficulty is profoundly recognised by the Roman Church in that she vests in her episcopal hierarchy not only the fullness of sacramental grace but also the fullness of prophetic utterance (i.e. infallibility so far as it is gathered up to a head in the "Vicar of Christ" on earth). That such a solution ultimately destroys itself is the insight of the Anglo-Catholics who see in it a view of God and the presence of Christ which is more Latin than Christian. But equally impossible is the Anglo-Catholic solution which attempts to lodge only the fullness of sacramental (priestly) grace but not of prophetic grace in the Bishop, confining to him only certain actions (e.g. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 83) with disastrous results both

to the Anglican episcopate (so bogged down in administration) and to Anglican preaching. This disorder is even reflected in the splitting up of baptism into two half-sacraments.

We are now forced to face the question as to the precise relation between the continuity of the Church as the living new creation in Christ, and the continuity of the Church in all the contingencies and relativities of history. The great difficulty about this question is that while on the one hand we cannot think of the continuity of the new creation as identical with the continuity of this present sinful world, nevertheless it is a continuity which has so interpenetrated history that its reality is unthinkable except as it includes historical succession on the stage of this world. In other words it is not with a determinist view of election with which we are concerned here, but with the eternal election as the living movement of God that enters our fallen world in Christ and so appropriates the Church in atonement (*περιεποιήσατο διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ ἰδίου*—Acts 20.28) that in her there is an indissoluble union between the eternal action of God and the movement of time. The eternal election of God becomes the inner core of history and constitutes its real continuity in the heart of the world's contradictions and relativities (cf. I, p. 14)—a continuity which both involves discontinuity and continuity with the visible successions of the fallen world. No doubt, as Professor Florovsky has said, a true solution transcends history and belongs to the "age to come" (I, p. 57), but inasmuch as that "age to come" has already broken into this age in Jesus Christ, and continues in His actual resurrection-body, we may begin to perceive here and now an answer on the Christological analogy.

The Virgin Birth tells us that we cannot understand Christ simply by placing Him in the continuity of the history of Israel, for at the Virgin Birth that continuity was broken by an invasion from above. And yet the Virgin Birth tells us also that here in Jesus we have the true Israel of God continuous with the Messianic Remnant of the Old Testament. Here is both continuity and discontinuity (cf. E. Gaugler, *Internat. Kirchl. Zeitschrift*, 3, 1947, p. 150 f.; and *Römerbrief*, I, p. 352 ff.; and Barth's powerful discussion, *Dogmatik* 2.2, p. 215 ff.). Accordingly one of the basic facts the New Testament has to tell us is that on the one hand the priestly continuity of the Aaronic

succession was broken by another continuity that is without beginning and end after the order of Melchizedek, but on the other hand the prophetic continuity is caught up and retransmitted through Christ and the Apostles in an apostolic succession, so that the New Israel is not founded upon a priestly continuity on the stage of history but precisely upon the continuity of the prophetic-apostolic witness. It is therefore a complete misunderstanding when the New Testament Church is spoken of as the "Israel of God" in such a way as to carry on the very kind of continuity from the old Israel which the prophetic-apostolic doctrine of the Messianic community regards as abrogated. The New Testament Church is indeed the Israel of God, but only as she is gathered up and incorporated into Christ. The fact that Christ is now ascended (this is the fact that Ramsey neglects in his contrast, *The Resurrection of Christ*, p. 99 f.) from the visible succession of history as we know it in this world, and *as such* (Eph. 4.8 ff.) gathers up the Church as His Body, tells us that we cannot think of the continuity of the Church in the midst of history except in terms of this new continuity. In the eyes of Calvin the whole "catholic" doctrine of episcopal succession is shipwrecked upon this rock alone, that the Church is grafted into the Israel of God "contrary to nature" (Rom. 11.24).

All this is even more clear in the light of the Resurrection of Christ, which tells us that we cannot find Christ to-day simply by placing Him in the continuity of history as we know it. To do so would be to by-pass the Resurrection. Jesus Christ has withdrawn Himself from sight that we may know Him by concentrating through the witness of the Apostles upon the Life, Teaching, Death and Resurrection of Christ, so that it is only in history and in this particular history that He gives Himself to be known. Had Jesus continued visibly in the succession of history the Cross would doubtless have been relegated to a mere incident of bygone history, perhaps to be forgotten, so the very fact of His Ascension affirms as nothing else could the essential historical foundation of faith and knowledge in Him. At the same time the Resurrection and Ascension tell us quite plainly that Jesus Christ lives on not only as Son of God but as Resurrection-Man—He is risen in Body. In Him the new creation is already a fact, and it is in Him that its continuity is a living

dynamic reality, and indeed in Him there is what Barth has called *new time*: the temporal continuity of the new creation in indissoluble union with the eternal God. It is in this new creation with its new time that the original purpose of God is perfectly fulfilled and transcended in glory. It is failure to think through the relation between the Church as the Body of Christ with God's eternal purpose of creation, as St. Paul treats of it in Ephesians and Colossians, over against this present evil world and yet as gathering up all things visible and invisible, that to a large extent makes confusion of our views of succession on the stage of history—e.g. the docetic transubstantiation of time that the "catholic" doctrine of episcopal succession ultimately involves. The Birth, Life and Death of Jesus Christ all speak, of the most complete interpenetration of history, and indeed of a desperate struggle with the terrible continuity of its sin and guilt, but they receive their truth and validity in the Resurrection where the continuity of sin is decidedly broken and yet where there emerges the new continuity in time. Here the visible continuity of history is judged as an empty husk, the worldly succession of the church as an ecclesiastical shell (I, p. 71), and yet the new is seen to be one continuous act with the first creation. Here where the iron-grip of guilt-laden history is broken we have the great salvation-events which are creative of the Church as continuous with the living Body of the resurrected Jesus Christ. It would be idle therefore to think of the visible continuation of the Church throughout history in any other terms than of these salvation-events (cf. Gaugler, *Römerbrief*, I, p. 173 f.). No doubt it is the constant temptation of a Church that must relate herself to contemporary history from age to age to barricade herself behind her own history against the invasion of the ever-new divine reality, and to overlook the fact that it is Christ and the Apostles alone who are the foundation of the Church (E. Schlink, *Ecumenical Review*, 1.2, p. 164). It is at this very point that Barth's essay has such relevance, for it calls the Churches back to their true foundation in a correction both of a false ontology and a false historicity. The real continuity of history itself is to be found not on the level of the contingent but in the continuing acts of Jesus Christ the Head of the Church—that is to say in the living continuity of the new creation behind the forms and fashions

of the fallen world but interpenetrating it through and through in the Gospel.

2. *The Mission of the Church*

It is significant that although the second of the Amsterdam volumes is mainly concerned with the mission of the Church, in neither of the first two volumes has it been possible to discuss the nature and mission of the Church except as they involve one another. This indicates a conception of the Church as essentially dynamic, the living Body of Christ engaged in "the purpose of God to reconcile all men to Himself and to one another in Jesus Christ His Son" (II, p. 219; V, p. 64). It is thus that the Church continues in the Apostolic Succession, that is to say, in the mission of Christ who is Himself the Apostle from the Father, and who commissions His Church in the same Apostolic mission. "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you. And when he had said this he breathed upon them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain they are retained" (John 20.21-23). In the Church as founded upon the Twelve, this Apostleship and the receiving of the Holy Spirit are coincident, which makes the Church's witness in the highest sense sacramental, as we have seen, so that her Word in the Gospel of reconciliation and forgiveness is in fact the Word and the Power of Christ. "He that heareth you, heareth me." That is surely the real substance of the Apostolic Succession, continuity in the perpetual Ministry of the Risen and Ever-Present Christ (T. W. Manson, *The Church's Ministry*). It is by faith and witness to this Lord that the Church is preserved and constantly recreated—by the very Word of the Gospel which she proclaims. It is thus that she has within her the well of water springing up into everlasting life. It is thus that the life-line in the power and presence of the Holy Ghost is maintained, and it is thus and thus only that she becomes the organ of the same Spirit that was breathed upon the first Apostles and put them in trust with the Gospel (P. T. Forsyth). This then is the Church Catholic because and in so far as she lives by the Apostolic Gospel through the power of the Holy Ghost she partakes of the fullness of Him who fills all things. To engage in the Mission of this Gospel belongs to the very

nature and life of the Church, for "the relation between Gospel and Church is not merely consequential but integral and constitutive" (Dr. Hogg, cited I, p. 153). Therefore to halt that mission, to restrict or limit the Gospel is to sever the Apostolic Succession, to destroy the life-movement of the Church, to deprive her of the Holy Ghost. As Bishop Newbigin puts it: "The Church cannot stand under the Cross without accepting an obligation to share with all men the redemption which was there won for it. It cannot evade that obligation without cutting itself off from the divine life by which it lives" (II, p. 32). All this means that the mission and the ministry of the Gospel are rooted and grounded in the whole Church and must be undertaken by the whole Church or by the whole people of God. "It is the Church which must be the 'mission'. It is upon the Church that the authority and duty is laid to preach the Gospel, for the Church is the redeemed community which itself lives by the Gospel" (II, p. 33). If the mission and ministry are primarily built upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, it is because they were constituted the actual place where the Divine Revelation became rooted in humanity, and so formed the human end of that Revelation, belonging peculiarly to its once-and-for-all nature and caught up into its finality. In its primary sense therefore the Apostolate is unrepeatable. It cannot be extended in time on the stage of this world. Along with the Prophets it forms the Heavenly Presbytery who worship the enthroned Lord for ever and ever. The earthly counterpart to this is the Biblical Witness of the Old and New Testaments, the unrepeatable and perpetual foundation within history of the Church of Jesus Christ.

Dr. E. L. Mascall has written recently some potent words in this connexion which deserve the fullest discussion. "The twelve Apostles are not the no-longer-existing initial stage of a process which is still going on; they are the perpetually persisting foundation in which the present ministry inheres. Once this point is grasped the tiresome and inconclusive discussion whether the Apostolate was intended by Christ to be a permanent element in the Church is seen to lose most of its meaning; the Apostolate *is* a permanent element in the Church, because in the glory of heaven the Twelve Apostles still exist. And unless we are to suppose the Church militant and the

Church triumphant to be two mutually isolated societies, this perpetual Apostolate must be relevant to us. And if it is relevant to us, how shall we expect to find it mediated if not through the ministry which has consistently claimed to be in organic unity and continuity with the Twelve? The apostolic succession, if it is a fact at all, is, of course, historically considered a chronological sequence, but its importance lies not primarily in the fact that it is a 'link with the past' (that would be mere ecclesiastical antiquarianism and romanticism) but in the fact that it is the foundation of a real unity between the Church and the Apostolate in heaven" (*Theology*, June, 1949, p. 220). Dr. Mascall has omitted to give Holy Scripture its proper setting in relation to Apostolic Succession—an omission which affects his view of it in the perspective of history—nevertheless he does appear to penetrate behind the present dilemma to something really fundamental. That is apparent when we consider the question of transmission (*παράδοσις*).

The difficulty lies in the fact that the real substance of what we call "Apostolic Succession" cannot be transmitted. It has to do with the Father's sending of the Son into the world, the relation between the Father and the Incarnate Son, crucified and risen, in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwells *bodily* (*σωματικῶς*). He is the Head of the Church which is His Body, and therefore the real substance of the Apostolic Succession has to do with the Body of Christ as the "fullness of Him who filleth all in all". In other words what we sometimes call "Apostolic Succession" really refers to the complete Body of Christ, the all-inclusive fullness or wholeness which precisely because it is that cannot be thought of in terms of the more or less of historical succession and temporal fulfilment, as something that can be added up in history or formulated in documentary lineage. Rather is it the continuing wholeness of Christ's Body into which from age to age we are sacramentally incorporated, and which can no more be a phenomenon within the time-series than the *Parousia* itself. It is important to note that this wholeness is constituted by Christ Himself, and would in no sense be defective if He were separated from us; nevertheless it is such a wholeness that Christ will not be without us and insists upon incorporating us into it (cf. Calvin, *Comm. on Eph.* 1.23). It is significant too that in this connexion the New Testa-

ment mentions Baptism rather than the Eucharist (e.g. 1 Cor. 12.12 f.; Eph. 4.4 f.), doubtless because it is in the once-and-for-all character of baptismal incorporation that the *whole event* of the all-inclusive Body of Christ is revealed (cf. Aulen, I, p. 24), which Paul describes so often as the active state of being "in Christ". Baptism does not only initiate us into the operational sphere of the salvation-events (*in den Wirkkreis der Heilsereignisse*) of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ but is the primary eschatological act of the Gospel whereby we are ingrafted into the wholeness of Christ (cf. E. Gaugler, *Internat. Kirchl. Zeitschrift*, 3, 1947, p. 151 and *Römerbrief* 1, p. 154 ff.). The Eucharist has sacramental significance as communion (κοινωνία—1 Cor. 10.16), as continual participation and renewing in this complete event. "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet" (John 13.10). Where for some reason the primary stress is laid upon the Eucharist, and a fatal distinction is made between the administering of Baptism and of the Eucharist (where the latter is severely restricted to episcopally ordained men), Apostolic Succession almost inevitably means the adding up of something in history, and the Biblical doctrine of the Body of Christ as an all-inclusive eschatological magnitude tends to be lost. If we recognise that the Church is "not merely a historical phenomenon but an ontological and eschatological reality" (Mascall, loc. cit.), an "all-embracing plenitude" (Florovsky, I, p. 50), which as such cannot be transmitted, then surely we may get behind the antithesis between "catholic" and "evangelical". In this case the "catholic" will have to rethink his view of Apostolic transmission as somehow an extension in time of the Incarnation of Christ, and the "evangelical" will have to rethink his view of continuity as that which is concerned only with the transmission of the Apostolic faith. Behind both these views there is something absolutely primary, the thought that "throughout the whole of history the Church remains identical with itself" (Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*, p. 144).

We have however to think of "Apostolic Succession" in a secondary sense, and this is where the expression is more appropriate. The Church has not only been ingrafted or rooted in Christ but is built up (Col. 2.7). Here we are concerned with the fact that the Church, already complete as the fullness of Him that filleth all in all, is yet multiplied (cf. K. L. Schmidt,

in *Wesen u. Aufgabe der Kirche in der Welt*, p. 15 f.). Here we think of the Church as "the particular, visible, historical society in which men and women are bound together in the communion of the Holy Spirit, and which grows through history by holding up Christ before men in the Word and Sacraments, and by ministering His love to them in its common life" (Newbigin, II, p. 30). In this connexion the New Testament can actually speak of the Word itself as increasing, multiplying and prevailing (Acts 6.7; 12.24; 19.20, etc.). By that is not meant that Christ the Word increases but that this living Word acts creatively among men building up on earth a Church "concorporate" (Mersch) with the all-inclusive living Body of Christ, and extending the area of its creative operation in the transmission of the Apostolic Witness. Behind the transmission and continuity of the witness there is a living continuity of the Word itself. Ultimately these are one, so that St. Paul can describe the divine plan or dispensation and the Church's stewardship in the Gospel by the same word (*οἰκονομία*). The witness is integrated with the whole body of the visible Church, and it is through the whole body growing in history that the Word continues His operation. Behind this lies the sacramental doctrine of *Kerygma*, already discussed, through which on the one hand believers are gathered up into the Church as the living Body of Christ and on the other hand the witness of men builds up on earth a community of Jews and Gentiles in sacramental concorporation (cf. *σύνσωμα*—Eph. 3.6) with the Body of Christ. The mystery of the Kingdom, the mystery concerning Christ and His Church hid from the foundation of the world, is now revealed to the saints, and as it is fulfilled in the Church through the preaching of the Word, all who believe may share in that mystery (Col. 1.25 f.). The mystery itself is not transmitted. It is revealed in the preaching of the Gospel, and by Word and Sacrament men are given to participate in it. Thus we think of the Apostolic Succession as a two-fold event such as we have described in the last verses of St. Mark's Gospel or in the last few verses of the Epistle to the Romans. On the one hand there is a transmission of witness according to the Scriptures of the Prophets and the Apostolic Gospel, but on the other hand the Lord Himself works with His Church on earth confirming her Word with power and establishing her in the

Gospel. That is the mission of the Church, the Apostolic Succession, the twofold but ever-new event of the Risen Christ calling the Church and empowering her to be a fellow-worker with Him in the evangelisation of the world.

No doubt our minds press for a closer understanding of that holy "synergism", but human analogies are so incomplete that they help but little. One might say however that just as in a telephone conversation the voice at one end of the line has no real continuity however successive its actions may be, but may attain continuity in the gathering up of both voices into one whole communion, so we may think of the Word of Christ Crucified and Risen as breaking into the continuity of our earthly existence and giving it in communion with Him its real continuity, even though ever since the Ascension the living Christ is withdrawn from sight at the other end of the line! Another analogy we might use, but just as incomplete, is that of counterpoint in a Bach Fugue, where the given *canto firmo* calls the lower melodies into added counterpoint, and where the counter subject finds its real continuity only in answer to the prime subject and in harmony with it. In such a Fugue there is an uninterrupted unfolding of events already implied from the outset. So perhaps we may think of the history of the visible Church in the contingencies of history as having her real continuity in contrapuntal relation, in ever-new obedience, to the ever-new breaking in through the Word and Sacrament of the Kingdom of God. Such a continuity is the Eucharistic life of the Church through which there is an uninterrupted unfolding of the once-and-for-all event enshrined in Baptism. It is because the Church on earth is already filled with Christ who Himself fills all things that the Church is empowered by an irresistible drive to carry her witness to the very end of the world (Matt. 28.18-20). It is a universal Christ (*Totus Christus*, cf. I, p. 50) who dwells in the Church and who by His death and Resurrection has appropriated the whole world. His Spirit is grieved and quenched wherever the Church fails to bear witness to the whole world. It is as she fulfils this universal mission of redemption that the Church enters more and more into her universal and catholic inheritance in Christ.

What better analogy is there than that given by St. Paul, the Christological analogy of the *Body*? The Union between

God and Man was in a real sense perfect at Bethlehem, and yet we believe that the Captain of our Salvation was made perfect through suffering. The Union that had broken into the continuity of history at Bethlehem was carried through the heart of history and through its deepest contradictions and discontinuities, even through the *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani* and hell itself, into the perfect union between the eternal Son of God and the New Creation in Jesus Christ risen from the dead. So may we not think of the Church as the Body of Christ, begotten of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost and carried through the world's contradictions and discontinuities, "in the likeness of sinful flesh", but reaching forth to that perfect union between Christ and His Bride at the *Parousia*? Therefore because the Church is already sacramentally concorporate with the Risen Body of Christ but still waiting herself for the redemption of the body, it is the function of the Church to live out the reconciliation or atonement of Christ in the world—that is, to be in the flesh the bodily instrument of God's crucial intervention, the sphere in which the great reconciliation already wrought out in the Body of Christ is realised among men, so that the life and action of the Church militant become sacramentally correlative to the life and passion of Jesus Christ, the Suffering Servant. Baptism and Eucharist mean that though she is once and for all dead, buried and risen with Christ (Rom. 6), yet the Church dies daily and is daily renewed in the power of the resurrection (2 Cor. 4). That is why the proclamation of Christ Crucified, the power of God, is constitutive of the Church's very life. The proclamation of the Word of the Cross is not that all men are as a matter of natural fact at one with God, but that this reconciliation is achieved only in desperate and crucial action, in the death and resurrection of Christ. And so the function of the Church in realising this at-one-ment in the world is to enter into the judgment of God in the death of Christ upon the world and humanity (cf. Florovsky, I, p. 55; and *Evangelische Theologie*, op. cit., p. 456: "The Cross is itself the *Eschaton*") and thereby to enter into the birth-pangs of Christ for the new humanity. The Church cannot be at one with the world, for its at-one-ment with God brings her into critical tension with the world reflecting the judgment of the Cross (hence the Eucharist), but that is the very point at which there is introduced into the

world the Gospel of a new humanity at one with God. Thus the Church is the atonement becoming actual among men in the resurrection of a new humanity corresponding to the resurrected Body of Jesus. "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." As Adam is correlative to the old humanity, so through the Cross and Resurrection Christ becomes the last Adam (ἔσχατος Ἀδάμ) correlative to the new humanity. It is participation in this Christ that is the life-process of the Church —an eschatological process right in the midst of the critical situation brought about by the fire cast upon the earth in the Gospel.

That is why the Church is so concerned with world-mission, for her very foundations rest upon it. She draws her life from the new humanity in Christ. She is in faith what one day she will be, and now her life-movement consists in becoming what she actually is in Christ. No doubt it is always a temptation of the Church to conquer a certain region and settle in on it and become self-contained, but that would be to forget that she can save her life only as she loses it for Christ's sake and the Gospel's. It would be to forget that the Church is humanity in eschatological concentration, the whole of humanity, and that in and through the Church this new humanity must break forth by the power of the resurrection and cover the earth. Therefore the daily health of the Church lies in her human range, and the more expanding and missionary she is the healthier her life-process. It is when the Church inhibits that life-process by becoming self-contained and stabilised, that the Church becomes impotent and inhuman. To restrict the Gospel would be to cut the roots of the Church from the resurrected Body of Christ, and therefore to cut the roots of the Church from humanity. It would be to sin against the Incarnation, to fight against the Cross, and to rebel against the will of God to bring all men under its redeeming power.

It is because the Church lives by the Cross and Resurrection that she has an eschatological nature which makes her such an explosive and revolutionary force in the world. If therefore, as Dr. Kraemer reminds us, we live in a universally revolutionary situation (II, p. 15), we must learn that the Church can only carry out her mission by recalling more and more the revolutionary character of the Gospel. Her relevance to the

world is precisely her *eschatological relevance*. That is to say her relevance lies in the fact that in Christ she is already the new humanity. It is only by bearing witness to this design of God in Christ and His Church that the Church can make her best contribution also to the order of the world. "The Church can only help in the disorder of the world, by really being the Church. Its most important duty to the world consists in allowing itself to be remade by the Word of God" (Schlink, I, p. 104). It is because the Church possesses proleptically all things in Christ, even the new heaven and the new earth, inasmuch as these are all summed up in Him, that "the Church's Gospel is not primarily the answer to men's needs" (Newbigin, II, p. 22; contrast here the whole approach of Dr. Horton who even declares that the New Testament eschatology and apocalyptic are not expressed in language which our age can comprehend—II, p. 96. How different is the report on p. 133!). It should not surprise us therefore to read: "It is being recognised that the problems of the proclamation of the Gospel in East and West are fundamentally the same, and that old distinctions are out of date" (II, p. 13). This is a significant note, for it calls us back to the fact that because of the Incarnation and the creation of a new humanity in Christ the Church is most relevant to the world as she keeps near Jesus Christ. She cannot discover her relevance by devising new methods of evangelism (needful as these may be) or by searching for points of contact, though the personal contact is of course supreme. On this whole subject nothing better has been written than the contribution of G. F. Vicedom (II, p. 178 ff.) which every minister ought to read and study. The Church must above all rediscover the Gospel, and relearn the supreme relevance which it has to every human situation. If Churches have lost their relevance it is because they have slackened their grip upon the Gospel of the Incarnation, Death and Resurrection of Christ, made easy and comfortable terms with the world, and only succeeded in neutralising the dynamic energy of faith.

To recover the Gospel in all its New Testament fullness will mean of course the casting of fire upon the earth. It will mean the preaching of such a message and in such a way as to throw men into upheaval and ferment, as to confront them with the necessity of accepting or rejecting Christ, as to cut through the

relativism of history with the knowledge that there is a Judge of history (Pierre Maury, II, p. 98 ff.). That is to say, far from coming to terms with the world "the Church must announce God's activity in history, which in Jesus Christ and His Incarnation gives Time its divine value" (I, p. 103). "The 'relevance' of this message to the world is this *contradiction* between the 'present age' and the 'age to come' " (II, p. 111, cf. "hatred of grace", p. 105). It is the relevance to sin (II, pp. 125, 127).

The Church will be unable to carry out this divine mission and function in the world unless she recovers more and more the eschatological character of her true being. The great shame and disorder of the Church is that she has collaborated with the disorder of the world and clothed herself with so many of its forms and fashions that so often she is too committed to the world and too compromised with it to be able to deliver the revolutionary Word of the Gospel with conviction and power (cf. Stephen Neill, II, p. 72 ff.). Because her true nature is eschatological the Church ought always to be shedding her outward garments, putting off the old man and putting on the new. "In order to ensure that she remains catholic the Church must constantly be scrutinising all these forms of her life in the light of God's Word and bringing them into subjection to Him" (D. T. Jenkins, *The Nature of Catholicity*, p. 57). Just as in the crucifying of the Body of Jesus the husk of Israel in which He was bodied forth into the world was rent and the Gospel released to the whole world, so the Church must be prepared as part of her dying and rising with Christ to mortify the deeds of the body, to lay her worldly form upon the altar of the Cross and in the shedding of old ways and habits, in the refashioning of her order, to release the Gospel effectively to the world of to-day (2 Cor. 4.10-12). It was just at this very point that St. Paul found himself involved in a controversy with Judaism because the Judaic disciples had not yet learned the catholicising nature of the Gospel, the almighty sweep of its comprehension revealed in the Cross which set the Church on a wholly new basis. The perpetual tragedy of the Church on earth is that she allows herself to become crusted over with secularism and goes about in the shabby second-hand clothing of a transient age. So often she is outwardly an anachronism. Instead of realising that the Body of Christ is a living moving reality,

and that she is the sphere in which the new humanity breaks into the world, the Church tends to come to terms with the old humanity, and even to identify herself with civilisation. But if the Church is indeed the new creation she must be fundamentally revolutionary over against the fashion of this world. That is why an era of real disquietude entered the world with the coming of Christianity. The Church is called to the task of ferment and upheaval in humanity attacking the stabilisation of orders fashioned to suit human selfishness. The more the Church discovers this New Testament vision, the more profoundly relevant to the present situation she will actually be. Where the Church is regarded primarily in terms of an Apostolic Succession that has to do with a continuity that reaches back through an unbroken historical series for its validity, the Church becomes so bound up with the passing form and fashion of this world as to be hopelessly bogged down within its history. Where however the mission of the Church is conceived in terms of an extending and continuous witness to the all-embracing eschatological reality and these two are held together indissolubly in Word and Sacrament, then the Church will indeed be *Power of God*. She is indeed the Power of God but that power has been so systematically canalised in the ever-deepening grooves of our hardened traditions that the full force of its mighty impact is yet to be felt in the world. The great lesson which we all have to learn from Germany, as Dr. Schlink has made abundantly clear (I, p. 97 ff.), and as Dr. Niemoeller has not ceased to proclaim, is that unless she repents the Church can only be renewed in judgment when under the hand of God the worldly props upon which the Church leans are taken away and the man-made traditions shamelessly endowed with absolute divine sanction are swept aside. In God's judgment and mercy that is the hour of release when the whole body of the Church (cf. the "*lay apostolate*", II, pp. 204, 223) rises up to assume the ministry of the Gospel and finds that all power in heaven and earth is given unto her through the indwelling presence of the Risen Lord.

II

VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF RESPONSIBILITY

A Discussion of Vols. III and IV of the Preparatory Studies

by The Rev. J. K. S. Reid

It is not easy to know how best to deal with the two notable volumes named above. Some attempt ought certainly to be made to present their contents and message to readers of the *Journal*. But many of them must already themselves have studied the volumes; and no doubt the best thing to say to those who have not done so is to emphasise their importance and plead for their being read. The Archbishop of Canterbury in a closing address, we are told, remarked that the total number of words spoken at the Assembly must have attained to the fantastic region of the numbers used to represent distance between the earth and the farthest stars. All these words were recorded—but not, one hastens to add, in the four volumes of preparatory studies and the single volume of the Official Report. But even so the scope of the volumes is prodigious, and the weight of the contributions most imposing.

To the present writer, it seems that summary of the two volumes under consideration here would be unprofitable, analysis impossible, criticism presumptuous, and amendment and improvement impudent. It is therefore something much more modest that is attempted here. All that is offered is a brief statement and review of some of the major issues that seem to have emerged and occupied attention during the preparation and course of the Assembly, together with some commentary upon them. It may be hoped that this quite unambitious and certainly far from profound attempt may succeed in indicating some of the important points dealt with, and that for this reason the personal and almost necessarily controversial remarks with which it is fitted out may merit forgiveness even when they fail to command assent.

2. Contents and Significance of Volume III

It is not regarded as part of the function of this article to accord praise and commendation. But it is worth while recording that for a volume of such composite character, the homogeneity of Vol. III is not only a pleasant surprise, but an important and impressive witness to the truth of its major contentions. There is a sequence and a progression of thought which, if not flawless, is generally clear. It seems possible to set it out in the following way.

We have here a study of the malaise or "disorder" from which society suffers to-day—of the "obvious and wide-spread political and social confusion" in which "our civilisation has been engulfed since the second decade of the century" (p. 13). When the question of the cause and ground of this malaise is raised, the volume presents us with a response that wavers just a trifle. Thus Dr. Niebuhr is at pains to point out that "we must resist the temptation to throw the whole responsibility of our present distress upon 'secularism' " (p. 14); and he goes on to locate the roots of the trouble in the "progressive development of technics" (p. 16), combined with the subsequent "failure of men and nations either to desire or to achieve a tolerable justice within the new conditions created by expanding technical power" (p. 18). From France, however, there comes a contribution which shifts the emphasis—as indeed we might have expected in view of the lesser extent to which the phenomenon here called technics has permeated the French social structure. Dr. Ellul finds the cause of our malady in the fact that "the traditional values of civilisation are no longer moulding civilisation to-day. . . . There is, therefore, a serious lack of balance, and we have reached a definite crisis" (p. 51). Dr. Brunner also inclines to blame technics less, but brings suspicion to bear on that secularisation which was earlier exculpated: it is necessary "to see that technics is not the cause of the real evil, but, at least in part, its effect". The deepest cause is "the progressive secularisation" of life during the last few centuries, "beginning in the West and gradually corroding all the religions and civilisations of the globe" (p. 177). There is no serious incompatibility here; if as Brunner says secularism and technics interact, there is no need to separate them too rigidly.

A contribution by Dr. J. H. Oldham elucidates the nature

and consequences of the "technics" whose advance has had so profound an effect on the society we know. Should any doubt exist about the meaning of the term, let two brief quotations suffice to clear up the obscurity: "Men have learned, not only to invent, but the technique of invention. The result is that invention follows invention with bewildering speed" (p. 29). So to-day "it is the technician who dominates and directs society in every sphere" (J. Ellul, p. 57). The most obvious results of this development are of course advantageous: man's power is enormously increased, and to-day he is able to do things beyond not only the capacity but the wildest dreams of his forefathers. There are also other advantageous considerations. We are invited in a citation from M. Philip Mairet to ask ourselves: "Should we have been able to proceed as far as we have done towards a mechanised economy unless men felt, even if vaguely, that our society was doing something *great* in this age of progress?" (p. 33). Moreover the respect for fact which is native to an age brought up on technics, and the qualities of "grit and skill" which it evokes, are to be placed on the credit side. But against these evident advantages, less obvious and even more profound disadvantages have unhappily to be weighed. The fact is that the atmosphere of an age of technics is not naturally agreeable to religion. The "power over our environment", and the "plenty of objects with which to distract ourselves" which it supplies to the man of to-day, are apt to encourage an "insensitiveness to religion". "Power over our environment" breeds inability to rest in the conclusion that anything wrong with society is more than a temporary maladjustment, or can finally resist "improvement" in terms of the skill technics possesses. Men are encouraged in the belief that, if anything is wrong, its seat must be outside the investigating technician, and be located "out there" where the power of technics may be readily applied.

There is moreover an even more sombre side to the technical power now resting in the hands of men. It has wrought first of all almost unnoticed but none the less extensive changes in the nature of the personal relations existing between members of society. These unconscious changes are outlined in a paper by Mrs. Bliss which complements Dr. Oldham's. The passing of the old-fashioned kitchen range is partly cause and partly sym-

bol of a transition which has overtaken the home, and turned it into a "sort of operational base from which the members go out into the larger community to be educated, to earn their living, and to find many of their social satisfactions" (p. 87). Technics further subtly influence the attitude of mother and child: she now feels that children "ought not to be a trouble if you know how to organise and manage them. Put in the right food and the right psychological handling, etc., and you will get the right results" (p. 88). Nor does the "bond of charity", which St. Paul urges us above all to put on, remain unaltered: a certain "antiseptic charity" is substituted, which employs ever "more and larger categories of persons to deal with first one and then another branch of human welfare" (p. 85).

Only one more turn of the wheel is required to reveal the even more sinister application of which all this is capable. The knowledge amassed by man is turned towards and against himself, and the nature and extent of his possible resistance to it is called into question. Professor Mannheim's well known judgment is cited, that the emergence of technical means of influencing human behaviour is more significant for the new age lying before us than the present social and economic structure.

The judgment of Vol. III is that the Church must be charged with failure to cope with the startling new situation. Or judgment being withheld, the fact at least is clear, that "the Church has left the care and the protection of man to others", as Jacques Ellul puts it; "in the intellectual sphere to science and philosophy; in the economic and social sphere . . . to socialism". One way or another, "the working people and the democratic forces in Europe came to believe that the Church was against them" (J. C. Bennett), and came to entertain a "profound sense of *resentment* not only against the Christian world, but . . . against Christianity itself" (Maritain, quoted p. 96). The situation is that the soul of man has now for some time past been increasingly moulded by powerful and new influences of a secular kind, among which the Church cannot be reckoned as a serious rival or competitor.

The conclusion to which the course of the argument leads merits the closest attention. It reaches expression in sentences like the following. "To-day man is subordinated to *things*; the coming society is a society made for these things and not for

man, and conceived in terms of things and not of man." The essential problem is "to find democratic ways of living for little men in big societies". "This kind of society . . . denudes man of significance"; ". . . the growth of organisation has for immense numbers of people greatly restricted the sphere in which they are free to take independent decisions."

What does it mean when such things, evidently conveying much the same meaning, are iterated from so many quarters—from the side of science, of economics and of politics? From the last of the quotations just made, one word was omitted. It was the word "responsible"; and it is the key word of the whole situation. "A responsible society"—this, to use the title of one of the chapters of this book, is the desideratum of the present day, as it is also the challenge of the Church. The name of the malaise that affects society is *irresponsibility*: its component members have lost the sense of being answerable. If the Church is to aid and guide society, it must bring its influence to bear at this point above all others. Whether this condition is in fact fulfilled, whether, i.e., the Church *ought* so to exert its influence, and whether it *can* do so, are further questions to which we must later advert. Meantime the other volume under review has to be considered. The title borne by the whole article no doubt already hints at an affinity between its conclusions and what has been said above.

3. Contents and Significance of Volume IV

The fourth volume of the Studies considers the "international disorder". The smaller number of contributions makes the book rather easier than Vol. III to pass in review. What Vol. IV apparently tries to do is, in a word, to call the nations to a sense of their Responsibility. The course of the argument runs thus. Three salient features characterise the modern situation. The first is the rise of the Great Powers. "When at the end of the middle ages, the *corpus christianum* of Europe broke up, the existing unity lost its common basis. This process went further and during the nineteenth century the society of states came to be suspended in the air of relative power" (p. 51). To maintain an equilibrium between these newly emancipated forces was a much more difficult problem when, with the loss of a common basis, the peace could be broken by any one that saw in such a breach the possibility of advantage.

The second factor is power. "The fear and fact of power overshadows men's minds. . . . Although men may fear power, they cannot forgo its use and its fascination" (p. 14 f.)—an ill-phrased sentence, whose meaning, however, is clear. The thought is that the Great Powers know that at any moment they may have recourse to force of ever growing dimensions. Once this step is taken, all personal relations come abruptly to an end: the dispute, whatever it may be, is settled in favour of the contestant, not with the better right, but with the bigger fist. The knowledge that the one to have first recourse to this arbitrament of war has an enormous initial advantage is itself an incentive to an early use of it, and makes the rupture of personal relations easier and more tempting.

The third factor is the "shrinking world": "the world stage is prepared for the interplay of four or five civilisations, which have practically no common ground" (p. 53). The annihilation of distance has brought into inflammatory proximity sovereign states whose natural and acquired power is such that safety is assured only by their being kept far apart.

The refuge from the alarms of this situation that is often proposed is the formation of such an international authority as may relieve the independent sovereign states of that autonomy which has been the source of so much dispeace. The state of the world "demands the gradual development and growing effect of true authorities above the states" (p. 56). But the opinion expressed here is suspicious and even hostile towards the proposal of any genuine supra-national colossus, "the unitary world state, a leviathan which might crush the smaller states, and destroy all that is valuable in the life of all states, great and small" (pp. 57, 62). The rule of international bodies has therefore to be established on moral authority and not on physical might.

In this situation, the Church has a decisive part to play. It is the duty of the Church to define in the hearing of the nations the limits of their power. "It is the responsibility of the Churches to remind governments and peoples that nations subsist under the governance of God" (p. 22); "the Church must proclaim that the state is not an end in itself, but it is God's instrument for the establishment and maintenance of a legal order . . . for both *national* and *international* life" (p. 69).

The Church, that is, has to call the State to a really responsible use of the authority with which it is commissioned and charged, a use which will secure the responsible development of citizens on the one hand, and on the other will recognise the State's own final answerability before the Source of all authority. "The first and last word of the Church should be responsibility" (p. 71).

Three comments may be made on this general conclusion to which the book leads. One section is entitled "Freedom of Religious and Related Human Rights", and, even if its contents merit the appellation of "stodgy" (p. 111), it is one of the greatest importance. Certain details of the work of the Church in the field of freedom are here recorded, and there is a noteworthy and reiterated emphasis on the aspects that make and keep men personal. "Man as individual" (p. 176); "any religious group may freely but responsibly pursue its chosen activities" (p. 180); "responsibility of government" (p. 182)—these are keynotes that constantly recur.

Second, a large part of the volume is occupied by the papers of Mr. John Foster Dulles and Professor Hromadka. These together with the verbal *contretemps* they provoked constituted the sharpest disagreement of the whole Assembly. Yet, as will be shown at a later point in this review, the chief contentions of the two protagonists are identical. Both are eager to secure for men that scope in which alone Responsibility can be exercised; the difference between them arises on the question of means. Or, to put it otherwise, the question at issue between them is whether or not the "new order" being established in Eastern Europe does or can provide that scope.

The third comment deserves a longer note. It may appear surprising that a volume dealing with the "international disorder" should talk on the whole so little about war. But a little reflection reveals the insight and wisdom of such restraint. Popular jargon, manifesting an unusually acute appreciation of the situation, has given currency to the term "cold war"; and this with fair accuracy describes the present state of affairs. Hobbes' classic definition of war runs as follows: that it "consisteth not in battle only, or the act of fighting; but in a tract of time, wherein the will to contend by battle is sufficiently known. . . . So the nature of war consisteth not in actual

fighting; but in the known disposition thereto, during all the time there is not assurance to the contrary. All other time is Peace." If this is a true definition, it may well appear that the international disorder is such, that it could be defined as a permanent state of war. It was an acute French observer who said recently that the times were such that war in the ordinary sense was unlikely, and peace in the ordinary sense impossible. It is this condition of veiled and covert conflict that is otherwise described when one of the earlier contributors writes: "War has become one of the permanent elements in our society" (III.55).

At the same time, it is all too true that from time to time the conflict does or can become overt. War, as, with some *naïveté*, we are accustomed to say, "breaks out". It therefore becomes necessary for this volume to advert to the special case when open hostilities occur.

The outstanding feature of the consideration given to the matter here is the emergence of a third view, additional to the two traditional views. Belligerency maintains that military action is the ultimate sanction of the rule of law, and that citizens must be distinctly taught that it is their duty to defend the law by force if necessary; pacifism persists in an absolute refusal to bear or use arms. Alongside of these, a third position is here defined thus (p. 222): "There are those who hold that, even though entering a war may be a Christian's duty in particular circumstances, modern warfare, with its mass destruction, can never be an act of justice."

That there are people who already hold this view need not be doubted. The present writer remembers hearing its expression a long time ago from a combatant in the First Great War. It seems, however, unlikely to commend itself to many as a viable position. The tension suggested between the individual's duty and the communal injustice involved by war is altogether too great to be tolerable. There are probably few who can see their way to sustain for long such a rarefied state of moral "suspense" (to use the Kierkegaardian expression, with which the position seems to have some affinity). The view of a Report submitted recently to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and adopted by it, which found this third way to be not finally negotiable, is one that holds a great deal of bluff common sense.

But whatever views be taken on the practical Christian attitude to war on its breaking out, there is unanimity about the place it fills in the international disorder of the day. War, "death's last decrepitude" to use W. H. Auden's startling phrase, is the final act of depersonalisation. Into this ultimate depersonalisation it is the shameful distinction of modern warfare to have inescapably plunged not only combatants but also non-combatants. Those engaged in the actual operations of warfare have always been regarded as "expendable" and as "cannon fodder"; and depersonalisation could not go further. But it could extend wider. This in fact it has done, not merely by exposing civilians to the hazards formerly met by combatants only, but by claiming and holding in fee the labour of those who remain at home. In fact at this point, it is difficult to discriminate between national and economic forces. As is affirmed in Vol. III (p. 57), "war is the ideal consumer". War therefore is not merely the temporary depression of man towards impersonal existence. It is even more the lurid symbol of man's permanent subjection to the impersonal forces by which modern society is so much determined. It is the final repudiation of Responsibility on both the internal and the external fronts.

4. Theological Insights

When the state of society and international relations are held thus in juxtaposition, it appears that they suffer from a malaise that is identical. Irresponsibility is the cancer which threatens the well-being, and even the existence, of both individual and society. The problem presented by the social disorder of the day is whether the Responsibility of the individual citizen will be preserved; the problem presented by the international disorder is whether nations will rightly understand the nature of their Responsibility. This identity of sickness that affects the body politic, whether the unit examined be the individual society or the world social order, is expressed in C. L. Patijn's contribution, with all the greater force and neatness in that the intention is not to emphasise the identity: "No society will work without individual initiative and enterprise, but equally no society will work where irresponsible power cannot be called to account and brought under control" (III.169).

Let us put the matter in another way. It is the state that occupies the key position in the present situation. Whether the state will exercise that judgment and wisdom which will preserve civilised life as we know it still remains to be seen. If it will do so, it must discharge two functions. It must become or remain the *guarantor of Responsibility*—i.e. must be the bulwark of the individual against others, whether single or in community, who will otherwise exploit and depersonalise him; for it is still true that *homo homine lupus*. And second, it must acknowledge itself to be also and at the same time the *subject of Responsibility*—conscious, i.e., of its own answerability before God.

It is now apparent that modern theology manifests a remarkable affinity with the statement of the malaise from which we presently suffer. I am thinking of course of that "theology of the Word" that has so pervasively influenced the theology of to-day, and has left so evident a mark upon it. Terms like Responsibility and its Anglo-Saxon equivalent answerability, have become household words on the lips of those who have contrived to keep abreast of recent theological thought. Man is constituted by his being addressed by God's Word, and his status is determined by the nature of the response which he makes to this addressing Word. The essence of man lies in the fact that he is a responsible being, finding the real element of his being not in contact with things but in contact with persons, in the primal personal relation with God, and in the secondary and subsidiary personal relation with his fellow men.

Two observations may here be hazarded. For one thing, it may be salutary to remark that theology thus suddenly leaps out of the realm of dispensable indulgence, to which some people are always consigning it, into that of essential discipline. Perhaps it cannot quite be claimed that theology invented and alone taught the terms in which the ills of the day have come to be defined. But that it should be speaking the same language as those bent on the amelioration of present disorder is at least evidence that theology is not quite so far away from "real life" as is sometimes supposed. The terms now employed in secular quarters for diagnosis and prescription, so far from being unfamiliar, are those of which theology has for some time made extensive use.

The other thing to be remarked concerns the significance of the terms. For the way that the theological definition and the general diagnosis of the situation fit in with one another cannot pass unobserved. Theologically we have been taught to regard this characteristic of Responsibility as essential to the being of man—so that it is at this point that we put our finger on what constitutes man man. It is, however, precisely here that the modern malaise has obtained foothold and exerts its debilitating power. With secularisation and technicology in the background, partly the result of and partly themselves aggravating the total situation, man is in danger of being denuded and deprived of that exercise of individual decision which is a condition of Responsibility. It thus appears—and the matter is of the utmost moment—that the modern disease is striking at the very vitals of man and his society. Its assaults are directed at a point which man cannot afford to surrender, and where, if the battle is lost, the campaign for humanity is lost. It must therefore be with a profound sense of the seriousness of the situation that, thus theologically instructed, we observe how the matter deploys itself further.

5. The Interest of Christianity in Responsibility

The way is now open to raise and if possible answer two questions of cardinal importance. The first of these concerns the nature of the interest Christianity possesses in the maintenance and promotion of Responsibility. It might of course be that its interest is derivative. The fact that society suffers sickness is alone sufficient to arouse the sympathy of the Church in any remedy proposed for its relief. Since decay of Responsibility is the trouble, and its resuscitation promises recovery, the forces of Christianity will naturally range themselves on its side. It would be the duty of Christians to do what they could to promote that Responsibility for the benefit of that society in whose welfare they have a stake.

If this were all the interest, it would finally be no more than an adventitious one, in much the same sense as a mother has an adventitious interest in Gregory's Mixture as a cure for her child's illness. Moreover the interest would be evidently temporary only, lasting while the ailment was one for which this was the cure, and changing direction when another ailment

was contracted which demanded different treatment. In fact the nature of the Church's interest in Responsibility is different and much more profound. Modern theology has been arousing Christians to the importance of Responsibility; it has been making plain that anything that injures Responsibility injures man in his essence, in what makes him man. To put the matter in specific terms, the religion that knows and teaches that men must finally render strict account before the Almighty Judge of all at the Last Day, can certainly not be indifferent to the opportunities for Responsibility offered and the threats made in this present life. It is manifestly nonsense to allege the Responsibility of man for his soul, and at the same time to display entire indifference whether he have a "real say" (to use the phrase) over the apparatus and furniture of the life which is finally bound up with the issues that are eternal.

The individual can therefore count on Christianity taking his part against anything or against any course of events that threatens the conditions which guarantee at least the opportunity for the exercise of Responsibility; and this for reasons that are grounded in the very nature of the Christian faith. But there is more than this to be said. Christianity has also a vital interest in seeing that collective Responsibility is rightly understood. One cause of the present malaise, as has been said, lies in the unbridled pretensions of the state. Christianity has an interest in curbing these, in so far as they constitute the sickness which affects our modern society. But if this were all, it would again be an interest strictly adventitious and temporary. In fact the interest of Christianity in a proper understanding of collective Responsibility is much more profound. The state itself is involved in Responsibility, not only as the guarantor of individual Responsibility, but as itself the subject of a Responsibility owed to another. The theme of the fourth volume under review is that the state tends to regard itself not merely as the guarantor but as the author of Responsibility, and so conceives itself as owing none. In this rôle, it offers challenge to the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith by denying the First Commandment. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me"—there have been and are many candidates for the part of pretender in terms of this prohibition; and some usurper or other is always playing rival to the uncondi-

tional demand of God. But the one that merits most serious attention to-day is the Leviathan of the modern state. It is evident that a challenge at this point is a thrust at the very heart of Christianity. Anything that proposes the breaking of the First Commandment must clearly be checked, and any pretender or usurper exposed.

The position, however, is not altogether simple; for the state not only owes but also rightly exercises authority. It is the duty of the Christian faith to keep on reminding the state of the tension in which it stands as it discharges these two rôles. In a word, it is the duty of Christians to be continually expounding in modern terms the meaning of the "divine right of kings". It has the duty of exposing the fallacy of the notorious "Hegelian howler", that "the State is the Divine Idea as it exists on earth", by affirming the Scriptural caution contained in Rom. 13.1, that, precisely because the "powers that be are ordained by God", they can never *be* God. Failure on the part of Christianity to point this out is much more than a mere missed opportunity of promoting the welfare of society; it is compromise with idolatry.

It is for reasons such as these (as it seems to the present writer) that the words of Vol. III cannot be given an exaggerated importance: "Any tendencies in State and society depriving men of the possibility of acting responsibly are a denial of God's intention for man and His work of salvation" (p. 200).

6. The Applicability of the Christian Solution

If Christianity has so vital a concern in Responsibility, it follows that it ought certainly to bring its weight to bear on the matter. But the intimate concern which it has is no proof that it has in its hands a solution capable of application. One recalls W. Herrmann's dictum, that to show a man needs a crutch is not to prove he has one, but only that he is lame. So of society to-day, the willingness of Christianity and its own desire to offer aid is no proof that it has effective aid to administer. I take it we are all familiar with the situation in which Christianity is claimed to be the solution for this or that ill. Everyone "feels" that this must be quite true; but when all is said not very many people see just how Christianity applies. One fears that the impeccability of the sentiment is sometimes regarded as exemp-

ting from the need of working out its application. It seems, therefore, at the risk of tedium, worth while to spend a moment in considering the applicability of the Christian solution in the case here being considered.

When the situation is represented in terms of Responsibility, it is not merely otiose to say that Christianity has the solution to the modern malaise. The fact is that only if the sphere of transcendence is acknowledged is there any case for man claiming a distinctive place in the universe. Genesis and the Psalms unite to testify that his "dominion over the works" of nature is the outward symbol of the "glory and honour" with which God has crowned him. Thus a little space is cleared around this one of God's creatures, in which he enjoys communion with his Creator, and it is in virtue of this that he possesses any special dignity. Only when the dimension of transcendence is admitted can man either hear or obey the command: "Son of man, stand upon thy feet"; and hence enjoy the promised privilege: "and I will speak to thee". If this ground of man's privilege collapses, its destruction carries away with it the basis of his Responsibility. And this basis being withdrawn, leaves man an easy, undefended and indefensible prey for forces which will utilise and complete his depersonalisation.

It is the common assumption of the writers of the papers before us that the sense of transcendence has been, if not lost, at least seriously impaired. Perhaps no one says this so forcibly as Dr. Brunner, who calls the "complete 'this-worldliness' of men's outlook" an entirely new phenomenon. Thus: "The modern world has lost the horizon of transcendence. This is the basic fact of the social disorder. If man does not believe in any superhuman destiny of man, if the very concept of human dignity has faded away (as it must do when severed from its religious roots), if the idea of responsibility has lost its sacred meaning—how can we expect anything but social chaos or its alternative, tyranny?" (III.177 f.). Man is thus exposed to-day to forces which necessarily for their own purposes regard him as inherently a valueless pawn, and which deprive him of the opportunity of exercising that Responsibility which essentially belongs to him. Economics reduces men to "hands"; and totalitarian tendencies see nothing improper in speaking of "the masses".

Here the Christian solution has immediate applicability. There never was a case in which "Believe in God" was more evidently the solution. Such belief is the acknowledgment of that transcendent dimension in which men enjoy a common dignity and a common Responsibility before God. To be religious is to bring with you the conditions under which the world's malaise is remediable. For this reason, whatever else the Church ought to be doing, it cannot give up doing what it has always done, viz. the proclamation of the Gospel as the power of salvation to individual men. As it does this, it does its essential work—though not its only work. We who are "working clergy" may not allow ourselves to be robbed of the conviction that, every time the Word is preached and men addressed by God, they are being called to assume and exercise that Responsibility in which their own chief end consists and on which the health of society depends.

And yet almost as fatal as forgetting this would be at the present time to think that remembering it was the only thing requiring to be done. A further step has to be taken.

7. Means of Application

Dr. C. L. Patijn draws attention to the familiar but by no means always remembered distinction between "two very different aspects" of the Church. "On the one hand it is an institution, organised for the purposes of preaching, administration of sacraments, worship, teaching and the pastoral ministry. On the other hand it includes millions of men and women who are actively engaged in the conduct of public administration, industry and the affairs of the public and common life. . . . It is the latter that have to bear the brunt of the difficulties of the relation between God's dimension and our three-dimensional world" (III.156). "Do they", he goes on to ask, "get the kind of help from the institutional Church which they need?"

No one would perhaps care to give the question an unqualified affirmative answer. And yet it is not a little thing that the "institutional Church" calls men into that atmosphere in which their Responsibility can alone survive; nor is it unimportant that the "institutional Church" in its first world Assembly should affirm so consistently the centrality and importance of Responsibility. This is to do something to "earth" Christian

principles too often left hanging in mid-air. It is to trace a Christian path by dotted line, even if not to plot a solid road. But there remains a discrepancy between Christian opinions about the detailed means of applying this Christian rule which, while it is partly inevitable, is altogether too great to permit of complaisance.

Independent and unsolicited evidence that what was done at Amsterdam had a recognisably practical bearing, that in fact what was said did really bite into the present situation, is found in the voices that on different sides have been raised in protest against the resolutions. Thus we are told on the best authority that certain American banking interests manifested violent hostility to an alleged sympathy with Communism. On the other side, bitter attacks have been launched by the Soviet Press (e.g. *Utschitelskaja Gazeta*, March 19), which indifferently bracketed together Assembly and individual delegates to charge them with calling for "bloodshed and for a war of destruction against the peaceable Soviet people, and for the benefit of the American imperialists". It is not on the whole a bad (nor a new) thing that a Christian council should occasion hostility rather than mere indifference.

But that secularism should raise its voice in protest is not evidence that the Christian witness is unanimous or unambiguous. It may perhaps be hoped that in so far as the promotion of Responsibility is recognised by Christians as the desideratum of the day, a greater degree of unanimity will in time impose itself upon the Churches in their pronouncements and upon Church members in their practical conduct. In the meantime, some of the cleavages that divide men do not open up along the line dividing Christians from non-Christians but along quite other lines; and here Christians are found taking sides against themselves. If one man, e.g., in this country condemns the policy of nationalisation as practised by the present government and advocates a return to a policy of a more liberal *laisser faire*, while another adheres wholeheartedly to present policy and deprecates any return or retreat, no one would dare to say which of the two was more Christian, or for that matter whether either was necessarily Christian at all. The divergence opens up along the line dividing conservative and progressive, or perhaps simply between two different assessments of the relevant finan-

cial facts, and certainly not along the division between churchgoer and non-churchgoer. Or again, in the now famous *pas d'armes*, John Foster Dulles might indict Russia for the deliberate violation of the laws of God, and Professor Hromadka contend that Communism is the answer to that longing on the part of the masses for "more human dignity, social equality, cultural progress and for a fair share in the political responsibility for the new order" (IV.127); and of course everyone will have his own opinion on which side right stood and which gained the honours of battle. But few people would dare to say that the line of division between the two is simply that which divides Christians from non-Christians. Nothing less than unremitting wrestling with the problems concerned in the clear light of the end to be attained, viz. Responsibility, can bring unanimity nearer.

While therefore the "institutional Church" necessarily holds its judgment in suspense, individual members of the Church must continually address themselves to the questions of the day and seek Christian solution to them. They are called to be in this day and generation a *tertium genus*, resisting the temptation to identify any one form of society with the Kingdom of God, but also refusing to abandon society to a fate of which they, as the light of the world and the salt of the earth, should steadfastly be warning it, and from which they may under God be used to deliver it. It would certainly be the most serious of betrayals if Christians, because they knew that no given or possible form of human society could be the complete embodiment of the Kingdom, were again to succumb to an indifferentism concerning the social order. It would be the grossest of misunderstandings if the knowledge that no society were perfect were to relapse into the suspicion that no one was better than any other. After all, in Tertullian's day the *tertium genus* was distinguished not for its withdrawal from affairs, but rather for its activism in a world to which the frigid pose of Stoicism appeared the highest, if also for most people the unattainable, wisdom.

8. Application of the Touchstone of Responsibility

It is with reluctance and trepidation that anything further is said, because it is bound to be so controversial. Yet it is perhaps only fair to make a brief trial of applying the touch-

stone of Responsibility to the chief forms of society with which the world of to-day presents us.

(*a*) *The Communism of Russia.* It is certainly not the intention of the present writer to add to innumerable commentaries on Russian Communism another which would of necessity be even more uninformed than most. But reference to what the volumes under review have to say is perhaps justified. Dr. Sherwood Eddy, in a recent article on "Religion and Politics in India" in *The Guardian*, Madras, 21st April 1949, quoted from a letter by a Christian, giving as reason for his adoption of Communism: "because I am a Christian". The explanation is given in the following terms: "while the mighty weapon of the demand for economic justice is left to the Communists in the revolution that is now sweeping across Asia, I have found Christians of India and Ceylon, like those of Japan, Korea and China, and for the most part like Christians of America, sitting quite complacently—blind, deaf and dumb to any need or demand for justice." This sentiment frequently recurs, and it forms the nerve of Dr. Hromadka's advocacy of Communism in Vol. IV, which has already been quoted. At the same time, apology is made for certain features: "How can we under (present) circumstances expect a normally functioning democratic process? . . . In certain circumstances discipline, service, responsibility, self-control, self-dedication are superior to freedom and human rights!" (p. 125). It thus appears that Communism is advocated because it will lead to something quite different from itself: "after the new social and political order has been thoroughly rooted and entrenched and adequately secured, . . . the official ideology will undoubtedly undergo—as it is actually undergoing—a process of transformation from within" (p. 132). But even this advocate expresses apprehensions concerning the "tremendous power in the hands of the present rulers", doubts that the "philosophy of historical materialism, . . . reducing man to a mere by-product of this social and economic environment, may—if unresisted and unchallenged—. . . let loose the purely animal passions of envy, hatred, greed and self-assertion", and the misgiving "whether the revolutionary tradition and Marxian materialism are capable of protecting the sacredness of human personality and freedom" (p. 140 f.).

This seems to the present writer to be of quite uncommonly

great interest. The apprehensions of this advocate of Communism are identical in broad outline with the criticism summarised at III.202, e.g. that the teachings of Communism are "incompatible with the Christian view of man as a person, made in God's image and responsible to Him". He is at one with critics who deprecate the use of modern psychological technique to "mass-produce" the subjects of the modern state. The point of divergence is reached when we ask if these undesirable features of Communism are transient and capable of being thrown away in course of development, or whether they are inherent and indelible characteristics of Communism which can be discarded only with its destruction. Most of us have our own answer to the question, and for many it must be quite different from Dr. Hromadka's. But there is at least a common Christian appreciation of where the Christian watch must be kept and the point at which Christian vigilance must be exercised: it is where Communism endangers, or denies, Responsibility.

(*b*) *The American Pattern of Democracy*. "In the U.S.A. no less than in the U.S.S.R.," Christopher Dawson is quoted as saying (III.145), "we are conscious of the victory of the mass over the individual." A curious identity of effect is thus produced by a diversity of causes. The social conformity that is deliberately produced in Russia by the employment of propaganda and other modern psychological techniques, is accidentally produced in America by the requirements of technical efficiency. What comes about in one country through control comes about in the other through absence of control. This is perhaps remarkable enough to call for some elucidation.

It might appear that the *laisser faire* principle so generally operative in the U.S.A. should have given the greatest encouragement to initiative and provided the most productive grounds for the development of individual Responsibility. Had *laisser faire* contrived to maintain intact its primitive robust "naturalness", this might indeed have been so. But the factor of "technics" enters into the field, and introduces a sophistication which upsets the primitive natural balance that might have been struck. The successful man is the one who employs the devices which technics supplies; but the expense and skill bound up with their employment permits only the successful man to de-

velop their use. Success leads to success, as the saying goes; and this has no doubt always been true. But the advent of technics upsets any natural balance there was, and artificially increases the cumulative effect of success beyond reasonable bounds. It weighs the dice in favour of the successful, and heavily against those who are not, or have not yet been, successful. That latitude and scope necessary to the development or exercise of Responsibility is thus narrowed and restricted. Society tends to run in a deepening groove in which a smaller and smaller oligarchy stands out from an increasing many, of which society can make best use if they retain a state of homogeneous uniformity. It thus happens that, as Mr. Dawson goes on to say, "without any intervention on the part of the state, men of their own accord tend to think the same, and look the same, and behave in the same way. . . . And consequently the United States has been the pioneer of a political hedonistic mass civilisation which is the chief alternative to the totalitarian ascetic mass civilisation of communism" (III.145). It becomes again evident that the matter of Responsibility is crucial and that Christianity, both for its own sake and for the sake of society, must be alert and active for its promotion.

(*c*) *The "Third Force"*. Does the form of state evolving in this country provide a genuine alternative to those that have been mentioned? The phrase quoted above, now commonly used to denote it, is provocative enough to suggest the inquiry. It differs from the Russian state in repudiating the gross abuse of all the propagandist means now at the disposal of a modern state for the formation of a uniform mass society. It differs from the American state in the degree to which the life of its citizens is organised and ordered by controls. The controls introduced for the defence of the state in time of emergency have been subtly prolonged, altered and enlarged for the quite different purpose of creating equality among the citizens. The equality is a highly artificial one, as is demonstrated by the elaborate system of controls required to create and maintain it. This is, however, a matter of no great importance in itself. In a sophisticated age, the attempt to maintain anything "natural" may well require the use of extremely artificial means. But whether this equality is identical, or indeed has anything at all to do, with Responsibility, is the question of the day.

When a carpet is smoothed at one place, the only result is often to create wrinkles in another. And the violent or at least forceful attempt to remove inequalities at one point in the social fabric may well only shift them to a different and perhaps less tolerable point. It is no doubt intolerable that inequalities of health should provoke severely inequitable financial burdens. But the Health Scheme has still to show that the manifest injustice which society as a whole now suffers from the unreasonable demands of the selfish and the hypochondriac (let alone the occasional visitor from overseas) upon the benefits it confers, is a more tolerable injustice than that which unchecked fortune once imposed. Or again, the man in the street is now admitted to equal part-ownership of the nationalised industries. But it would not be easy to show that he has become a more responsible working man since his employers changed and he himself gained a tiny but "equal" foothold with millions of others in his new employers' camp.

The real danger for the form of society exemplified by this country is not different from that threatening the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A.; but it makes its threat in a different way. The threat is to Responsibility. In the U.S.S.R. the threat is offered by totalitarianism which may regiment Responsibility out of existence; in the U.S.A. by libertarianism which may permit it to die of malnutrition; in this country by a mollycoddling egalitarianism by which it may be smothered. It may be true that "poverty is more unpleasant to the poor than being regimented" —there is all the greater need to declare and stimulate the desire for freedom. One may allow that "you will never convince the bulk of the population of the importance of liberty, until you convince them, by espousing their claim to equity, that you are not using 'liberty' as a catchword for reaction" (III.145). But equity is different from equality, and the latter is not proved to have a great deal to do with the promotion of Responsibility. The Christian aim is to secure for men that free area for deployment and exercise in which the individual may find scope both to practise and to develop Responsibility. While of course some restrictions will be necessary for this, it is not at all certain that the controls and centralisation that the egalitarian experiment requires are compatible with the provision of this free area.

9. In the Meantime

Perhaps a final word may be permitted. It is quite evidently impossible for the Church, in either of the two meanings assigned to the word, quite suddenly to take over some function or operate some source of influence, and by this means to bring about an immediate reversal of tendencies hurtful to man's rightful development. If anyone thought that some such suggestion might emerge from the First Assembly, the hope was doomed to disappointment. It would indeed be nice if there were instruments upon which the Church could suddenly lay hold, and by means of which it might work a catastrophic change in the constitution of the whole. But this cannot be seriously expected.

In the meantime, while being faithful to its watching brief, the Church has the task of declaring that Word in which and through which Responsibility exists; and every time it is declared, something is done to promote the health of a sick world. The Church moreover is itself a centre of that responsible existence which it is called upon to promote. It both exemplifies and encourages man's responsible life in personal relations with his fellows. As social community, the Christian congregation is a standing and protesting criticism of the tendency on the part of larger and higher associations to "arrogate to themselves functions that can be performed efficiently by smaller and lower societies" (III.128). As worshipping community (p. 127), it sets men in the atmosphere where the difficult lessons of living together in true personal relations can be learnt and applied. And lest this should seem merely to advocate going on in the same unaltered old way, we are carefully warned by Dr. J. H. Oldham (III.127). It is only by forging new bridges over the now perilous chasm dividing the world from the Church that men may find in the Church and in the Christian faith the guarantee and ground of that Responsibility for whose sickness the world is paying so high a price in unrest and perplexity.

THE PRESBYTER IN PRESBYTERIANISM

by The Rev. Professor J. H. S. BURLEIGH

I

The words Presbyterian and Presbyterianism are so familiar as applied to our Scottish ecclesiastical system as to seem almost to belong to its essence or at least to indicate its essence. Nevertheless there is a certain diversity of view as to how Presbyterianism is to be defined. It is perhaps a not entirely insignificant fact that the term is familiar only in the English-speaking branches of the Reformed Church family. Among the sister Reformed Churches of the Continent it is not in common use. Continental theologians addressing ecumenical assemblies, whenever they use the word Presbyterian, seem instinctively to interpret it by the addition of the explanatory word "synodal", evidently regarded as synonymous. The Presbyterian Alliance bridges this gulf in nomenclature by means of a rather cumbrous official title. It is officially The Alliance of Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian form of Church Government. It would appear that our familiar denominational designation is due to some accident of Scottish or British history.

The first occurrence of the word Presbyterianism, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is in the title of one of George Gillespie's minor writings, "Recriminations charged upon Mr Goodwin in defence of Presbyterianism" (1644). But the cognate adjectives, Presbyterian and Presbyterial, are well established in Scotland by 1638 to describe the system which took shape there under the influence of Andrew Melville in 1580, was recognised and established by law in 1592, was restored in 1638 and pertinaciously defended at Westminster by the Scots Commissioners and their English allies; which finally triumphed in Scotland in 1690, and has since spread with the Scottish race throughout the British Commonwealth and the U.S.A. It was in what has been called the Second Reformation that the principles of "classical Presbyterianism",

in the modern no less than in the original sense of the word "classical", were clearly formulated.

In saying this I do not of course mean to deny to Knox or his system the name of Presbyterian, though it was unknown to him or it. Alexander Henderson in his short account of *The Government and Order of the Church of Scotland*, published anonymously in 1641, acknowledges that this system was somewhat more fully developed than in the days of its infancy, i.e. in 1560. Miss Janet Macgregor is doubtless right in tracing this development to the growth of the Reformed Church, experience of the inadequacy of the polity of 1560, and above all to the need of countering the attempt to introduce bishops under the guise of Superintendents. In particular the Presbytery was devised for the immediate and continuous supervision of local Church life. Doubtless also Melville had profited by his experience of the French Church, which since 1559 had had an elaborate constitution whereby local Consistories were subordinated to Colloquies, these to Provincial Synods and these again to the National Synod. It may well have been Beza who suggested to him the word Presbytery, a New Testament word which, according to Beza, was the equivalent of the Genevan Consistory. In any case we do find in the *First Book of Discipline* the rudiments at least of the full system as it developed later. Between the Kirk Session and the General Assembly there is the Superintendent's Council, but there is also the Exercise attended by neighbouring ministers and others. In Ordinations "neighbouring ministers" are to carry through the examination of the candidate, and the ordination itself is entrusted to the "chief minister" present who need not be the Superintendent.

A sort of half-way house may be seen in the ecclesiastical organisation of the larger towns. As soon as the number of the faithful required it and ministers became available, these towns were served by a plurality of ministerial colleagues and governed by one general Session. Traces of this system survived until 1929. The model was presumably Geneva, but at Westminster great stress was laid on the point that in Jerusalem, Antioch, and Ephesus in Apostolic times several distinct congregations formed "one Presbyteriall Church"—a Church " sufficiently presbyterated", as it is put in the *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici*. In fact the *Second Book*

of Discipline does not sharply distinguish between a congregational and a classical eldership, and Calderwood seems to have maintained that the Kirk Session was simply a committee of the Presbytery.

There was obviously much in the *First Book of Discipline* that was rudimentary and provisional; necessarily so because so few qualified ministers were as yet available. There is no reason to suppose that the system of Andrew Melville was other than the natural development to full growth of that of John Knox. At all events the Classical Presbytery became from 1580 onwards the dominant feature in Scottish Church Government, and its controversial storm-centre. It was singled out for special reprobation by King James who at the Hampton Court Conference in 1604 declared, "If you aim at a Scotch Presbytery it agreeth as well with Monarchy as God with the Devil. Then Jack and Tom and Will and Dick shall meet and censure me and my Council. No Bishop, no King."

In England too in the reign of Queen Elizabeth many had been fascinated by the Genevan model, and sought to have it introduced into the Church of England as the only divinely authorised Scriptural form of Church Government. In 1570 a number of Puritan ministers presented an Admonition to Parliament craving a reformation of the Church; which gave rise to a lively controversy between Cartwright and Whitgift, and prompted Hooker to study and expound the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity. In 1573 we find Sandys Bishop of London informing Bullinger of Zürich of persons in England who would have a presbytery in every parish, presbytery here being what we now call a Kirk Session. In fact about that time ministers in various places were associating "laic" elders with themselves for the government of their congregations, as in the famous instance of Wandsworth. Moreover they drew together with other like-minded ministers to form associations or classes, the minute book of one of which has been edited and published by R. G. Usher.[1] They met for consultation, deliberation, study of Scripture, prophesying, resolution of problems of ministerial duty; but only tentatively and without binding authority, because such assemblies were illegal, and the Crown

[1] *The Presbyterian Movement in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth.* As illustrated by the Minute Book of the Dedham Classis 1582-1589. Royal Historical Society, 1905.

egged on the bishops to suppress them. In 1573 Travers on his own responsibility drew up a scheme of ecclesiastical discipline, closely resembling Andrew Melville's *Second Book of Discipline*, but more clear-headed. The hierarchy of courts appears as in the French Reformed Church, whose nomenclature was adopted—Consistory, Colloquy, Provincial and National Synods. The book remained a pious dream, and in 1592, the year of Melville's brief triumph in Scotland, the parallel movement in England was crushed or driven underground.

Once again I have no objection to the common usage which calls this movement Presbyterian, a name as yet unknown to Cartwright or Hooker. Cartwright and his fellows came to be referred to as "the old Non-conformists" (as e.g. by Baillie). But I am bound to express surprise when Usher says[1]: "The Movement is chiefly distinguishable from later Presbyterianism in that it was a movement inside the Church to stay in it, or at most to modify its government. The later movement was an attempt to supplant the Established Church by a systematic Presbyterian government." It is plainly absurd to say that the Westminster Divines, so far as they were Presbyterians, wanted to supplant the Established Church, though they were of course charged by the Episcopalian squire, Sir Thomas Aston, with actually, if unintentionally, attempting this. Most of them were moderate Episcopalians who probably regarded Presbyterial Government as a *via media* wherein all or nearly all parties might walk and find accommodation. "There was, moreover", continues Usher, "no connexion between the two movements; there was even no continuity reaching from one to the other; from the 'Presbyterians' of Elizabeth to the 'Presbyterians' of the Civil War". Certainly the term Presbyterian had emerged in the interval, and had come to denote a well-defined system which had established itself in Scotland; was presupposed, by the Scots at least, in the Solemn League and Covenant; and had its admirers up to a point in England too. But was not Dr. Reynolds "of Cartwright's mind", as Bancroft observed at Hampton Court ?

Already before 1592, when it was evidently hopeless to obtain the Discipline of Travers, some had boldly left the

[1] Op. cit., p. xxiv.

Church, seeking reformation without tarrying for any. In Dissent they did not attempt to realise Travers' ideal. Instead they practised Congregationalism and developed the theory of Independency, some of them in exile on the Continent, others in New England. Their successors confronted the Presbyterians at Westminster with the contention that there was no Scriptural warrant for a National Church at all, or for a Classical Presbytery with jurisdiction over the local Church with its Presbytery. The authors of the *Apologetical Narration* of 1643, who were "the dissenting brethren" of the Westminster Assembly, believed that they had found a *via media* between "authoritative Presbyterial government" which, "with all its subordinations", cannot work without State compulsion, and the absolute independency of the Separatists and Brownists whom they abhorred. Their plea is for a non-authoritative association of Churches living side by side in brotherly communion. It was their dissent that gave rise to the Grand Debate at Westminster and to the controversial writings of Rutherford, Gillespie and Baillie, in which the principles of Classical Presbyterianism came to classical expression. These debates with their pedantic and obsolete learning and their hair-splitting logic must seem to most people now to be intolerably dull. In this they might not differ from other theological debates, e.g. Arianism or Pelagianism. They are not for that reason unimportant. Their importance lies in the fact that they are a contribution to the systematic discussion of the Doctrine of the Church. That doctrine for the first time at the Reformation became the paramount theological issue, and it has not yet been authoritatively defined. To-day the Ecumenical Movement is occupied with the same problem, only its discussions take place in the light of a more historical appreciation of the Biblical documents and a deeper theological insight into the Biblical concepts.

To sum up what has been said so far. (1) The Reformed Churches were following their natural and logical course of development when, as they everywhere did, they organised themselves in a hierarchy of courts or synods. Certainly this had the full approval of Beza, Calvin's successor, who saw in it the proper mode of applying the Genevan system to larger national territories.

(2) The most important of these courts practically would be that which was competent to ordain ministers, and to exercise immediate and continuous supervision over local congregations; which was, that is, "ordinarily sufficient" for Church Government. It might be one Church with a plurality of Pastors and Elders, as in a large town, or an association of congregational Elderships, "ane or ma". In Scotland after 1580 this court was called a Presbytery.

(3) By historical accident, as it were, in Scotland and England but nowhere else, the Reformed Churches had to encounter in controversy Episcopalians on the one hand and Independents on the other, and both controversies centred largely on the Classical Presbytery. Against Episcopalians the Presbytery is defended as the proper organ for ordination of ministers and the true source of jurisdiction and power to "visit Kirks". Against the Independents it is defended as a support for congregations, a guarantee against error and abuse, a security for an adequately "tried" ministry, and a link preserving the unity of the Catholic Church. Out of these controversies there emerged the name Presbyterianism, a fact which at least suggests that Presbyterianism means Church Government by Presbyteries. This conclusion might be claimed to be proved if it could be shown that the name was first bestowed by opponents; that those who favoured Presbyterial Government were dubbed Presbyterians by their "opposites". Now this is what the Episcopalian Sir Thomas Aston does in his Protest of 1641, curiously enough not in his text but only in his table of chapters. In the Grand Debate concerning Presbytery and Independency it is the Dissenting Brethern who apply to the majority the terms Presbyterial Divines (p. 1) and Presbyterians. On the other hand the name is used freely by Baillie alone of those to whom it had been given. Add to this the total absence of the name from the usage of the Continental Reformed Churches, and the proof seems conclusive.

II

So far what has been said touches the problem of this paper only indirectly, but is not I hope without relevance. The derivation of the name Presbyterianism from Presbytery

runs counter to another theory by which it is derived from Presbyter. A learned writer in the *Princeton Review* for April 1860 (p. 189) maintains that: "According to the Presbyterian Church, the Presbyter is the only order of permanent ministers in the Church—the only order ordained by imposition of hands of the Presbytery, the only order clothed with the power of ordination by imposition of hands, the only authorised administrators of sacraments and public teachers of doctrine—an order which contains within itself both the eldership and the deaconship, and may therefore be taken as the representative of all. . . . That this is the true exposition of our modern denominational title, there is satisfactory evidence." This writer was primarily concerned to maintain that elders are laymen, and to combat what has been called the Presbyter-theory of the eldership which was at least put into cold storage at Westminster. I shall pass by that question entirely. What I am concerned with is what may be called the Presbyter-theory of the ministry as it has been elaborated by a modern Scottish school of apologists for Presbyterianism, of whom Dr. Warr is an eminent recent example.

It is necessary to recall briefly the history of the word Presbyter. Literally of course πρεσβύτερος means an older man, and is so used in the New Testament and early Christian literature. But it also appears in an official sense in the Church as in the Synagogue. In Acts, in addition to apostles, prophets, teachers and evangelists, there are local church office-bearers usually styled *Presbyteroi* who on one occasion are said to have been made bishops, i.e. overseers, by the Holy Ghost. In St. Paul's Epistles, apart from the Pastorals, there are no *Presbyteroi* but there is one reference to bishops and deacons. In the Pastorals, Clement of Rome, and Hermas, bishop and deacon seem to be the official titles, though presbyters are also mentioned sometimes as officials without relating them in any way to the bishops and deacons. Titus 1.5-7 presents the problem at its hardest. The simplest way of accounting for the evidence is to suppose either that bishop and presbyter are names of the same office (presbyter-bishops) or that presbyters are Church office-bearers in general, while bishops and deacons are more specialised functionaries. Anglicans of all schools seem willing to concede the identity of bishop and presbyter in the New

Testament, but claim that their bishops are successors not of the New Testament bishops but of the Apostles. Dr. Farrer[1] allows that possibly the episcopate arose from the presbyterate by elevation, but claims that, if so, the process of elevation was the providential creation of an office whose holder might receive, from higher hands, and transmit Apostolic grace to all time. The process of episcopal elevation is paralleled by the more significant one of the localisation of the Apostolate in the monarchical bishop. All this is somewhat speculative, and Timothy and Titus are worked rather hard in support of the theory.

Towards the end of the first century in Asia and Syria there emerges the historic hierarchy of bishop, presbyters and deacons which was soon to become universal. It may be because of its novelty that Ignatius stresses this σωματεῖον without which οὐ καλεῖται ἐκκλησία; and he does so apparently on practical and not on theoretical grounds, not e.g. on the ground of Apostolic Succession. Lightfoot indeed sees this in *Trall.* vii but it is very indistinct. In Ignatius it belongs to the bishop alone to perform all ecclesiastical functions validly, though strangely ordination does not occur in his long list of functions. Little or nothing is said of the functions of presbyters or deacons except that they assist the bishop. But Ignatius does allow a bishop to delegate (any or all?) his functions. As the number of Christians in a city multiplied, necessitating plurality of worshipping congregations, this delegation must have become regular, unless each congregation was to become an *ecclesia* with bishop, presbyters and deacons of its own. The Catholic Church did not take that way. There was to be but one *ecclesia* and one bishop in the city. Consequently the bishop's sacramental functions or some of them were normally entrusted to presbyters ordained by and subject to him. According to Dr. T. G. Jalland[2]: "By the latter half of the third century the bishop's sacramental monopoly is beginning to break down, and the process by which the Presbyterate became assimilated to the Episcopate is under way." The eighteenth *Nicene Canon* puts presbyters among "those who offer", and in the fourth century Jerome can say that the

[1] *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 168 ff.
[2] Op. cit., p. 314.

presbyter does all that the bishop does except ordain. This Dr. Jalland calls Presbyterianism, and he traces it very interestingly through the fathers, the scholastics and the canonists down to the Council of Trent. He may put it in this way if he likes, though there was no very real assimilation of the presbyterate to the episcopate. In any case even if there had been, the result would not have been Presbyterianism as we understand the term.

In the third century a new word crept into the nomenclature of the Christian ministry bringing important consequences. "It would not be out of place", says Origen, "to call them (i.e. Christian ministers), priests and Levites". Tertullian regularly calls the bishop *sacerdos* or *summus sacerdos*. In Cyprian *sacerdos* normally means bishop. When presbyters came to perform most of the day-to-day sacramental functions their title was popularly writ small as priest, connoting something very different from the New Testament presbyter. If the presbyter was assimilated to the bishop it was not quâ presbyter but quâ sacrificing *sacerdos*; and *sacerdotium*, which included both presbyter and bishop and the Pope too for that matter, became for the medieval theologian the highest of the Holy Orders. Ordination, ostensibly to the presbyterate, was in reality to the priesthood. *In sacerdotium ordinant*, says Calvin, making men *sacrificuli* to the dishonour of the One High Priest. Hence no importance attaches to the fact that ordination was included among the seven grace-conferring sacraments, while episcopal consecration was not. Ordination as the Reformed Churches understand it means not to make priests but, again in Calvin's words, *episcopum et pastorem constituere*.

Perhaps one further complication should be referred to here. Erasmus, as is well known, attempted to freshen up the New Testament by putting it into modern speech, whereby he gave great offence to the theologians, not only because he thus cheapened Scripture, but because he did away with many of the ancient proof texts culled from the Vulgate, so shaking the medieval theological fabric. One of his ventures was to translate πρεσβύτερος uniformly as senior, even in the passages where the Vulgate had retained presbyter. This passed into the English Bible through Tyndale who everywhere translates "elder"; to the confusion of many, though not of the leaders

at Westminster, as Selden found to his sorrow; nor of course of Calvin.

Both the theory and the practice of the Reformed Ministry go back to Calvin. In the Genevan *Ordonnances* there is laid down a four-fold ministry of pastors, doctors, elders and deacons derived from Scripture, and thus *de jure divino*. This scheme reappears in Cartwright and in the Scottish *First and Second Books of Discipline*. But behind the *Ordonnances* lies Calvin's immense exegetical labour systematised in the *Institutio*, enlarged and elaborated but unchanged in ideas as edition succeeded edition. Here we must look for Calvin's theory of the Ministry, drawn as he believed from the New Testament, and supported by history, and by a sharp critique of the clerical abuses of his own time. Bishops are nominally the pastors of their Churches, but they pay but scant attention to their pastoral duties. They are rather magnates enjoying vast possessions, often do not reside in their dioceses, seldom or never preach, and are commonly ignorant and vicious. They vaunt themselves as successors of the Apostles but resemble them neither in life nor in doctrine. The office of presbyter is a public office *ad regendam ecclesiam*, but few presbyters do anything of the kind. Some with titles of dignity —parsons, canons, prebendaries, etc.—merely carry out ceremonies. Monks, chantry priests and most parish priests are mere *sacrificuli* employed in reading and singing Masses. Deacons forsake their Scriptural functions and merely assist priests or are on the way to become priests.

From his criticism of the existing hierarchy one might have expected Calvin's Reformed Ministry to have retained the traditional three-fold pattern and the traditional names. In accordance with his understanding of the New Testament standard, only bishops would preach and teach, administer the Sacraments and rule; presbyters would only rule; and deacons would attend to the needs of the poor and the sick. I believe that is what his teaching amounts to. But either to avoid misunderstanding or perhaps rather to penetrate behind words to things, he preferred to designate the ministers of the Church by their functions rather than by their traditional titles, viz. pastors, rulers and deacons, the pastorate being the essential ministry—*praecipuum nervum quo fideles in uno corpore cohaereant.*

For the second order in the ministry, the rulers, Calvin's regular name is *seniores, anciens*. The question arises: Did he hold the presbyter-theory of the Eldership? Principal Campbell believes that he did, and chides him for it. If he did, it does not appear in the *Institutes*, though it does appear in his commentary on 1 Tim. After all what was the conscientious commentator to make of 1 Tim. 5.17? Opponents of the theory in question have their own subtle ways of interpreting that passage, but Calvin was honest enough to recognise that it spoke of *duo genera presbyterorum;* and he was followed by Rutherford, Gillespie and the authors of the *Apologetical Narration* ("ruling elders—with us not lay but *ecclesiastique* persons separated to that service"). At all events Calvin never called the Genevan elders presbyters, nor in the *Institutes* does he base their office on 1 Tim. 5.17. His authority is Rom. 12.7 and 1 Cor. 12.28 where he holds that two of the *charismata* denote two perpetual offices in the Church, *gubernatio et cura pauperum. Gubernatores fuisse existimo seniores a plebe delectos, qui censurae morum et exercendae disciplinae una cum episcopis praeessent. . . . Habuit igitur ab initio una quaeque ecclesia suum senatum conscriptum ex viris piis gravibus et sanctis penes quem erat illa . . . jurisdictio in corrigendis vitiis. . . . Est hoc gubernationis munus saeculis omnibus necessarium.*

What now of the presbyter-theory of the ministry in the stricter sense, the theory according to which the essential permanent ministry is the Presbyterate, inalienably in possession by Apostolic institution and *jure divino* of all ministerial power, and transmitting it in orderly succession through ordination?[1] Certainly the original identity of bishop and presbyter is asserted and is supported by quotation from, among others, Jerome, who also supplies the reason for the differentiation, namely schisms and heresies in the Church stirred up by the devil. Calvin gives his own account of how the bishop came to have pre-eminence over the presbyters, and how in particular ordination came to be regarded as peculiarly his right. But when Calvin asserts the primitive identity of bishop and presbyter, it is not in the interests of presbyters as such as opposed to bishops. It is in the interests of the *apostolicum ac pastorale munus* which is essential for the conservation of the

[1] Cp. Dr. Warr, *Presbyterian Tradition*, p. 85.

Church on earth—a *munus* which is fulfilled by the preaching of the Word, the administration of the Sacraments, the pastoral oversight of souls and the government of the Church. "I use the words bishops, presbyters, pastors and ministers *promiscue* as does the Scripture" of those who bear spiritual rule over the Churches. He would even call them Apostles inasmuch as they are "sent", not however like the original Apostles to the whole world but to a fixed and constituted Church. He actually calls them bishops as readily and as frequently as presbyters. But their distinctive title is pastor or minister. Here we have a genuine assimilation of presbyter and bishop, very different in character from that alleged of the medieval theologians. For it is not in terms of *sacerdotium*, a conception which is completely rejected, but in terms of *pastorale munus*. Nor does the idea of succession play any part in the doctrine of ordination, even though ordination is by the solemn imposition of hands of those already ordained. Ordination is simply *episcopum et pastorem constituere*. Apostolicity can only mean resemblance to the Apostles in life and doctrine. It was its insistence above all else on a pastoral ministry that gave to the Reformed Church its strength and even its *raison d'être;* as neglect of this had been the weakness of the Medieval Church.

III

Writing on "The Presbyterian Standpoint" in a symposium dealing with the Union of Christendom, Dr. J. Wilson Baird says: "The Episcopal office was done away deliberately, but simply on the ground that bishop and presbyter were originally one . . . and the fact that both the Church and its essential order of ministry, the presbyterate, were of divine origin." So far as Calvin is concerned, this is at least misleading. Calvin did not do away with the episcopal office on these grounds. He reformed it by restoring what he supposed, rightly or wrongly, to have been its original pattern. And the same intention is no less clear in the long struggle of Presbytery against Episcopacy in Scotland (1572-1690). Certainly the original identity of bishop and presbyter is assumed, and not only on one side, but it is far from being basic in the Presbyterian position, which is not as Burn Murdoch has been induced to suppose, founded upon an uncertain historical theory. I have looked in vain for

the word presbyter in the official records of the General Assembly (*Book of the Universal Kirk*) and in the diary of James Melville. It does occur in the *Second Book of Discipline* among the names given to ministers. "Pastors, bishops or ministers ar thay wha ar appointit to particular congregations . . . sumetyme they ar callit pastors becaus they feid their congregation; sumetyme episcopi or bishops because they watch over their flock; sumetymes ministers be reason of their service and office; and sumetymes also presbyters or seniors, for the gravity in manners quilk they aucht to have in taking cure of the spiritual government." It is used very sparingly and by no means normally by Henderson, Baillie, Rutherford and Gillespie, who characteristically speak of pastors or ministers.

The dispute between Presbytery and Episcopacy in Scotland, at all events, has little or nothing to do with the historical question of the original identity of bishop and presbyter. It is solely concerned with the nature of the episcopal office as held forth in Scripture. Andrew Melville and his friends and followers maintained that in Scripture the episcopal office implied a ministry of word and sacraments to a particular flock, and that in the Kirk there is no superior office. "Bishops as they are now made in Scotland", i.e. since 1572, represent a "corrupt state of bishops" drawing their authority from the King or from the Pope's wicked hierarchy. They are prelates rather than bishops. Dom Gregory Dix[1] makes Melville's point more forcefully than Master Andrew himself when he describes them as functionaries "in episcopal orders whose principal *raison d'être* was to administer certain Acts of Parliament for the Uniformity of Religion".

Twice during the controversy the General Assembly abolished Episcopacy. The Act of 12th July 1580 reads: "Forsuameikle as the office of ane bishop, as it is now usit and commonly taken within this realm, hes no sure warrand, auctoritie or good ground out of the Scripture of God, but is brought in by the folie and corruption of men . . . the haill Assemblie . . . finds and declares the said pretended office, usit and termit as is above said, unlawfull in the selfe as having neither fundament ground nor warrant within the Word of God . . .". Again in 1638 the Assembly of Glasgow declared

[1] *The Apostolic Ministry*, p. 297.

the mind of the Kirk to have always been that "all Episcopacy, different from that of a pastor over a particular flock, was abjured in this kirk and to be removed out of it." The language is obviously chosen with great care, and gives not the slightest support to the view expressed by Dr. Wilson Baird. Bishops were not done away that presbyters might be supreme, but a corrupt form of the Episcopate was removed to make room for what was believed to be the Scriptural form. We may smile at the idea of the pastor of a simple congregation being designated bishop, so accustomed are we to think of bishops as being, at least, persons of immense social prestige, a situation which perhaps began with Constantine and reached its climax in Northern Europe during the Middle Ages, and still persists in England. The Synod of Sardica decreed that it is unlawful to constitute a bishop in a village or small city lest the name and authority of a bishop fall into contempt (*ne vilescat*). The result was that just before the Reformation it was hard to believe that a bishop was in any real sense a pastor. The pastoral office was the Cinderella of the Medieval Church, in spite of Chaucer's admiration for the person of a toun, a poor presbyter, who devoted himself selflessly to the parochial ministry, with no hope of ever becoming a bishop. The Reformation achieved much if it did nothing else but exalt that office. Even Reformed Churches have sometimes to be reminded that the ministry of Word and Sacraments to ane particular Kirk is the highest office in the Church.

There is, however, one famous passage in our Standards in which the word presbyter does occur, and with considerable prominence. In the Westminster Form of Presbyterial Church Government and Directory for the Ordination of Ministers, it is laid down that, while Ordination is the Act of a Presbytery, and the power of ordering the whole work of Ordination is in the whole Presbytery, nevertheless "every Minister of the Word is to be ordained by Imposition of Hands with Prayer and Fasting by those Preaching Presbyters to whom it doth belong . . . Preaching presbyters orderly associated either in Cities or neighbouring villages are those to whom the Imposition of Hands do appertain for those Congregations within their bounds respectively." Every phrase here was the subject of prolonged debate. The Dissenting Brethren directed their

attack mainly against the proposition that "it is very requisite that no single Congregation that may conveniently associate do assume to itself all and sole power in Ordination", i.e. against the whole idea of a classical Presbytery. Gillespie was of course adamant on this issue, but seems to have opposed the rule about preaching presbyters, here following apparently the *Second Book of Discipline.* The expression Preaching Presbyters is certainly curious and may be a reminiscence of the discussions concerning the two kinds of presbyters. One may feel that the emphasis is on the adjective rather than on the noun. I suspect that we owe the expression to the majority of the Divines who had of course been ordained presbyters by bishops, and were under necessity to defend the validity of their ordination against the Independents who regarded it as null. Episcopal Ordination "we hold for substance to be valid, and not to be disclaimed by any who have received it." Those so ordained, on appointment to a charge are to be subjected to "a cautious Proceeding in Matters of Examination," but are not to be reordained. Perhaps it is worth noticing that those ordained in Scotland, or in any other Reformed Church, are said to have been ordained minister, not presbyter.

It has also to be observed that nothing is said about Apostolic Succession in the Directory. Certainly no man ought to take upon him the office of a minister of the Word without a lawful calling, though what constitutes a lawful call is not stated. Seemingly it is not the call of the congregation, whose rights are limited to showing just cause of exception against a minister proposed for them. Moreover ordination is the solemn setting apart of a person to some public Church office, normally to a pastoral charge, and is always to be continued in the Church. But the question of succession was bound to arise for men who were striving to steer a middle course between Anglican Episcopacy and Independency. "Lineal discente" had already been repudiated in the Scots Confession, and Knox gave no reply to Ninian Winzet's query: By what authority? To the Jesuit Tyrie, however, he claimed that the Kirk had directly and lawfully flowed from the Apostles because "we nether admit doctrine, ryte nor ceremony which be their wrytingis we find not authorised ". Rutherford carries the matter much further and traces the succession of pastors

to pastors back through the Roman centuries to the Apostles "for the substance of their ministry". Henderson likewise writes: "In respect of their (the Apostles') doctrine, holiness of life and substance of their ministry, which is *successio in caput*, all faithful pastors lawfully called to their functions are their successors". And again: "All faithful ministers who have laboured in the Word and Doctrine, for the planting, preserving and purging of Religion to the edification of the Church, and no other are successors to the Apostles." But the question for obvious reasons was much more acute in England where the Anglican system was of long standing, and where a *jus divinum* of Episcopacy was asserted in opposition to the Presbyterian claim. It is not therefore surprising that in two English documents emanating from Presbyterian Ministers in London, the presbyter-theory of the ministry is set forth with all insistence. In *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici* and *Jus Divinum Ministerii Evangelici* (both of 1654), the foundation argument is the identity of bishop and presbyter in the New Testament; the elevation of the bishop over the presbyters in a prudential way by custom of the Church as a rampart against schism; a succession of persons to feed and govern the Churches who at first were presbyters, and, even when called bishops, were not bishops in the later sense that invests them with power over presbyters. In the second Appendix to the latter document (Proposition 3), we actually have the phrase: "Presbyters have an intrinsecal power and authority to ordain Ministers." These two Puritan documents present a view of Presbytery which has appealed to a school of Presbyterian apologists who do not otherwise have much favour for the Puritans, but they have no official standing in Scotland, and they go much further than any of our divines, and perhaps venture into more dangerous and vulnerable positions.

In conclusion reference may be made to a clause in the Scottish Claim of Right, 1689, later embodied in the Act of the Estates abolishing Prelacy: "Prelacie and the superiority of any office in the Church above Presbyters is and hath been a greate and unsupportable grievance to this nation, and contrair to the inclinations of the generalitie of the people ever since the Reformation; they having reformed from Popery by Presbyters, and therefor ought to be abolished." It has often

been observed that Parliament "removed Episcopacy on the low, but practical and sensible ground that it was contrary to the general inclinations of the people" and left on one side the question of *jus divinum* of Presbytery. But it has not been remarked that it departs no less in ecclesiastical nomenclature from the Scottish Presbyterian tradition, and foists on the Reformation a quite unheard-of interpretation. John Knox had been a presbyter, but he did not regard as his call to the ministry and work of reformation the rite in virtue of which he had been called Sir John. Presbyters of the old style were not admitted *ipso facto* into the Reformed Ministry, except as readers on probation; and neither Rutherford nor Henderson lay any special stress on the fact that most of the Reformers had been presbyters, though perhaps they do not dismiss it as of no account. They insist that the Reformed Church is no new Church, but derives from the Apostles through the Church of Rome. But they rather rely on a hint given by Calvin who said that "God sometimes raises up extraordinary ministers, Apostles or at least Evangelists, to bring back the Church from the defections of Antichrist as in our time." Both Rutherford and Henderson acknowledge that there was "somewhat extraordinary" in the office of the Reformers. That they had been presbyters under Papacy was quite unimportant. Doubtless it is impossible to know who was responsible for drafting the Claim of Right, but it was someone who only understood what Baillie would have called the Canterburian dialect. In any case it is neither a theological nor an ecclesiastical document, whatever legal status it may have.

I think it is true to say that the word presbyter is quite secondary in Presbyterianism. It is certainly unknown to our popular usage, and except in one place does not appear in our official Standards or in our official documents. It might also with great advantage be abandoned in discussions with other Churches. The Presbyterian presbyter is so completely different from the Anglican presbyter that the use of the word only leads to hopeless confusion. If Anglicans generally should become willing to follow the lead of the authors of *The Apostolic Ministry* and see in the bishop the Minister of Word and Sacraments to his people, their teacher and liturgical leader, our discussions with them will be able to take a new and more fruitful line.

UNIVERSALISM OR ELECTION?

by The Rev. T. F. TORRANCE

In the foregoing number of this *Journal* Dr. J. A. T. Robinson has done us the service of raising once again the question of universalism in a way that both merits admiration and challenges discussion. Rarely has the case for universalism been stated so adroitly and so persuasively, but when even that statement rests upon deep inconsistencies one has less hesitation in turning away from the formidable authorities which he cites to the voice of the Catholic Church which throughout all ages has consistently judged universalism as a heresy for faith and a menace to the Gospel. Without doubt however there is a great truth here and that must be disentangled from the dangerous untruth.

The first difficulty we are presented with is that while Dr. Robinson sets himself to answer the question whether a doctrine of universal restoration is wholly incompatible with a truly *Biblical* theology his real answers are not given on Biblical lines. The first half of the argument is grounded upon the law of non-contradiction, whereas the second half is made to repose upon a human analogy. In fact the whole argument presupposes that what I can think *is*, and what I cannot think *is not*. To be sure Dr. Robinson insists that God is what He asserts Himself to be, and that the final proof of that assertion is eschatological, and to be sought in the last chapter of history. And yet the extraordinary fact is that Dr. Robinson claims to be able to assert now by his own logic the truth of a doctrine which even he admits rests ultimately upon the final action of God. That takes us to the root of the matter. Is the love of God to be understood abstractly in terms of what we can think about it on a human analogy, such as human love raised to the *nth* degree, or are we to understand the love of God in terms of what God has actually manifested of His love, that is Biblically? Are we to understand the omnipotence of God in terms of a hypothetical 'can' or 'must', again raised to the *nth* degree, or are we to understand it in terms of what God has

actually done and does do, namely in terms of the actualisation of His power in history, in Jesus Christ? Can we ever get behind God's self-manifestation and His action and discuss the relation of omnipotence and love in terms of the necessity of His divine nature? Surely not, and yet this is just what Dr. Robinson has done. He has taken omnipotence and love as logical counters and set the problem in such a way as to find a logical answer—and of course in that setting the desired conclusion, universalism, follows easily. By means of the law of non-contradiction (i.e. by logical necessity) he sweeps aside every argument against universalism, and emerges triumphant with the prize that universalism is a single divine decree.

But in all this Dr. Robinson has only side-stepped the real problem, namely that sin is illogical, and by its very factual existence cannot be rationalised without being rationalised away. Even God could not answer the problem of sin except by the desperate *action* of Calvary, but the atonement does not come into this logical setting at all. Or to put it the other way round, what *logical* connection is there between the forgiveness of my sins in 1949 and the death of Jesus under Pontius Pilate? By applying the category of necessity Dr. Robinson has bridged the chasm of sin too easily and forced upon the situation a false unity that implies universalism from the outset.

Dr. Robinson appears to realise this difficulty to a measured degree when he discusses the problem of freedom. When the problem is set forth it is raised as the freedom of choice, but when he comes to solve it the answer is given in terms of the freedom of complete self-expression or self-determination, and so he slips the argument deftly through a subtle ambiguity. If universalism must follow from a necessity of the divine nature, then all roads must lead to the same goal. It does not matter how often one insists that hell is an eternally live option, that universalism leaves the desperate urgency of the Gospel untouched, it does not alter the fact that a universalist 'must' of necessity is a constant denial that the question is open. Ultimately God's will is unendurable: the sinner *must* yield. Then Dr. Robinson produces his master-stroke. Up to this point every argument has depended upon the law of non-contradiction, but now that he finds himself in difficulties with regard to freedom he decides to lay that law aside and take refuge in

the *I-Thou* relationship where it does not apply. This extraordinary somersault means that by so doing he has cut off as with a hatchet the whole of the foregoing argument!

We begin over again with an analogy from human love, and this is drawn with remarkable skill. From the irresistible character of human love we advance to the ultimately unendurable love of God which inevitably brings the sinner to choose a foreclosed result. The argument carries only aesthetic power and does not produce conviction, for this relation between two human beings, given an analogical extension to the relation between God and man, is predicated univocally. It would have been better to have learned from St. Thomas Aquinas; better still to have learned from Biblical analogies, such as that of the relation between Jesus and Judas. If all that Dr. Robinson has said were true one would be utterly at a loss to understand why Judas who for several years had the priceless privilege of enjoying to the full the love of the Son of God should not have found that love irresistible. If ever omnipotent divine love was manifested it was in Jesus Christ, and yet in the very hour when the supreme token of that love was given to him at the last supper Judas went out to betray that love with a dastardly kiss. The only valid analogy we have is in the life and death of Jesus Christ and there we learn where divine love was poured out to the utmost that men in unbelievable hardening of heart rejected it to the very last. Dare we go behind Calvary to argue our way to a conclusion which if we could reach by logic would make the Cross meaningless? If universalism is true, is a necessity, then every road whether it had the Cross planted on it or not would lead to salvation.

All that Dr. Robinson's argument succeeds in doing is to point to the *possibility* that all might be saved in as much as God loves all to the utmost, but it does not and cannot carry as a corollary the *impossibility* of being eternally lost. The fallacy of every universalist argument lies not in proving the love of God to be universal and omnipotent but in laying down the impossibility of ultimate damnation. Dr. Robinson has cited passages from the New Testament which would seem to him to point in the direction of universalism, but what of those many other passages which declare in no uncertain terms that at the last judgment there will be a final division between the

children of light and the children of darkness? What of the shuddering horror of the words: "It were better for that man had he never been born", which came from the lips of Omnipotent Love? There is not a shred of Biblical witness that can be adduced to support the impossibility of ultimate damnation. All the weight of Biblical teaching is on the other side.

Universalism is always and inevitably inconsistent for two reasons. (*a*) It commits the logical fallacy of transmuting movement into necessity. At the very best universalism could only be concerned with a hope, with a possibility, and could only be expressed apocalyptically. But to turn it into a dogmatic statement, which is what the doctrine of universalism does, is to destroy the possibility in the necessity. This is precisely what Dr. Robinson has done. He started off in the second part of his essay, with a personal analogy and a personal truth, but immediately he proceeded to universalise it. In such a procedure the actual historical particularity of every choice as a free movement disappears, and necessity takes its place—no matter how hard one may try to avoid it, and Dr. Robinson has tried very hard. Apparently he has not realised that thinking in terms of universals in point of fact destroys the free decision of faith; that when personal Christian truths are turned into general truths they become necessary truths. Every free personal choice is rooted in historical existence. To think it *sub specie aeterni* is to abrogate it. Universalism inevitably becomes shipwreck upon the stubborn particularity of the personal event.

(*b*) It commits the dogmatic fallacy of systematising the illogical. Sin has a fundamentally surd-like character. Somehow evil posits itself and cannot be rationalised. The New Testament teaches that when it speaks of the *mystery of iniquity*, and of the *bottomless pit* (*abyssos*). Evil is fundamentally discontinuity. No explanation involving only continuity or coherence can ever approach the problem, for that would be to draw the line of continuity dialectically over discontinuity. The doctrine of the atonement teaches us that no matter how much we think about it, here our reason reaches its limit. It cannot bridge the contradiction between God and man in guilt. The contradiction is resolved only by an act of God in which man in contradiction to God is reconciled and yet the terrible

bottomless reality of sin is not denied. That act of God is ultimately eschatological so that just how the contradiction is dealt with in atonement is yet to be revealed at the *Parousia*. That is the relevance of apocalyptic, but apocalyptic is the antithesis of universalism. Universalism is the doctrine that rationalises sin, that refuses to admit in its dark fathomless mystery a limit to reason. Universalism means that the contradiction can be bridged by reason after all, and constitutes therefore the denial of atonement and the anguished action of Calvary. The Christian faith which has looked into the limitless depth of the *Eli, Eli lama sabachthani*, and considered the great weight of sin to discover that only by act of God can man get across the gulf, will accept the way of humility where the Cross makes foolish the wisdom of this world. It will learn the discipline of suspending judgment in order to avoid foisting a false and abortive unity or a closed system of thought upon the actual facts of existence. The irrational mystery of evil is the other rock upon which universalism as a unitary interpretation of existence inevitably suffers shipwreck. True dogmatic procedure at this point is to suspend judgment (ἐποχή), for here that is the most rational thing reason can do. Whether all men will *as a matter of fact* be saved or not, in the nature of the case, cannot be known.

The doctrine of universalism gains its plausibility not from itself, for it is inherently and inevitably inconsistent, but from the inconsistency of the position it attacks. That is very apparent in Dr. Robinson's essay which attains its force in criticism of a position where God's righteousness and love, or His omnipotence and love, are thrown into false antithesis. That has long been the difficulty with the traditional doctrine of predestination and reprobation as a double decree. In actual fact, however, the *Biblical doctrine of election* is the very doctrine which expresses the universal action of God's grace in such a way that, far from dissolving the personal elements of choice and decision, it establishes them. It is the doctrine of election therefore which is the great truth that is partly apprehended and yet obscured in the error of universalism.

Election means nothing more and nothing less than the complete action of God's eternal love, that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever

believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life". It is the eternal decision of God who will not be without us entering time as grace, choosing us and appropriating us for Himself, and who will not let us go. Election is the love of God enacted and inserted into history in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, so that in the strictest sense Jesus Christ is the election of God. He is the one and indivisible act of divine love. There is therefore no decree of predestination which precedes this act of grace or goes behind the back of Jesus Christ, for that would be to split the act of God into two, and to divide Christ from God. Jesus Christ is wholly identical with God's action, that which was, and that which is, and that which shall be, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

The Incarnation of the Son of God means therefore that the eternal Word of God has become event in time, and that through the Cross the eternal decision of God has invaded the sphere of our temporal relations. Just because the love of God is not only act in time but a Person, Jesus Christ, the eternal election of God has become encounter, acutely personalised in the midst of our choices and decisions, demanding response and decision. Election is not therefore some dead predestination in the past or some still point in a timeless eternity, but a living act that enters time and confronts us face to face in Jesus Christ the living Word of God. Precisely because this Word is also eternal it is always contemporary with us, travelling, as it were, through time. The great fact of the Gospel then is this: that God has actually chosen us in Jesus Christ in spite of our sin, and that in the death of Christ that election has become a *fait accompli*. It means too that God has chosen all men, in as much as Christ died for all men, and because that is once and for all no one can ever elude the election of His love. In as much as no one exists except by the Word of God by whom all things were made and in whom all things consist, and in as much as this is the Word that has once and for all enacted the eternal election of grace to embrace all men, the existence of every man whether he will or no is bound up inextricably with that election—with the Cross of Jesus Christ. Every man's being is bound up for ever with the one and indivisible act of God's love in Jesus Christ. How could it be otherwise? The life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are the final reality of

our world upon which everything else depends. All things are summed up in Him, things visible, and invisible, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven. The whole universe revolves round the Love of God in Jesus Christ and all its motion depends entirely upon Him.

Far from avoiding election, preaching should make election Biblically understood, as the very centre of the *Kerygma*. And the miracle of the *Kerygma* is just this that through it the once and for all event in Jesus Christ becomes event all over again in the faith of the hearer. Through the *Kerygma* the eternal election continues to become event in time and continues to complete God's choice of love in the answer of love which declares: "Herein is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins, and not for our's only but for the sins of the whole world" (1 John, 4.10; 2.2). The amazing message of the Gospel is that Christ has chosen all men, died for all men. In that He died for all He has taken the judgment of all men upon Himself; thus in that He died all died. The Cross is thus both the enactment of the Love of God and the judgment of all that contradicts God's love. It is inevitably that in the midst of a world where the love of God is denied as it was at Calvary. But it is love in the midst of its own judgment that will not let men go, and lays eternal claim upon them. The Cross is the divine judgment, the *eschaton* already enacted in the world and pressing (*βιάζεται*) to its fulfilment in the *Parousia*. It is the eternal decision to choose man in love and to divide between man as the creature of God's love and all that denies him being in the divine love. Precisely because it is that, it is the abiding judgment of love (the wrath of the Lamb) upon all that chooses the way of sin and the denial of God's love.

In face of that to be reprobate can only be the choice of a godless man. The Gospel tells us that in the death of Jesus Christ God has enacted a justification of the ungodly. Still to be reprobate is an un-understandable mystery—the mystery of iniquity. To choose our own way in spite of God's absolute choice of us, to listen to the voice of His infinite love and to know that we are already apprehended by that love in the death of Jesus, and by that very apprehension of love to be given the opportunity and capacity to respond in faith and love, and still

to draw back in proud independence and selfish denial of God's love, is an act of bottomless horror. If the light that is in us be darkness, how great is that darkness! To choose our own way and yet in that choice still to be chosen by God would be hell. Can we imagine anything more appalling than that a man should use the very power that God gives him to choose to contradict God, should choose to depart from God, and yet be unable to depart, because in spite of all he is still grasped by God in an act of eternal love that will not let him go? The choice by God's love, once and for all enacted in the Cross of Jesus, holds that man in being in spite of the fact that he chooses the very contradiction of love and life and being. If God were for one moment to relinquish His grasp of the godless man, and to do so would not be of love, he would vanish into nothing. No doubt that is what the godless man wants above all, to escape from the eternal love of God. But God's love is eternal, and God's love has been once and for all enacted as an event that divides between love and what is anti-love. Love will not let go. Even when a man has made his bed in hell God's hand of love will continue to grasp him there. To choose finally and for ever—unfathomable mystery of iniquity—to say "No" to Jesus is to be held in a hell of one's own choosing and making. It is not God who makes hell, for hell is the contradiction of all that is of God. This is the horror of great darkness that came upon Gethsemane and Calvary, that by pressing the issue of divine love to the point of ultimate decision, God risked the happening of the incredible, that men should still choose to contradict the utmost work of love, even in justifying the ungodly. That they did so choose to do at Calvary is a ghastly fact, and in that fact the Cross unmasks the bottomless dimension of sin in the human heart. The whole of the Bible stands aghast at this vast mystery of iniquity. It refuses to betray the Love of God and the agony of Jesus by a doctrine of universalism, but on the other hand it refuses to teach the equally terrible doctrine that God's action is split into two by a double predestination. God's action remains for ever the one and indivisible action of love, and even the dark whirlpool of ultimate denial cannot alter that fact. The fact that every man is drawn into that whirlpool which threatens to suck him down into its bottomless pit of darkness in the

eternal judgment of love imparts to the preaching of the Gospel an infinite urgency. If it were not for the fact that all men are already chosen in Christ there would be no hope. But this is the good news of the Gospel that Christ has died for all that whosoever will may be saved. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord we persuade men, for the love of Christ constrains us as we make this judgment that when Christ died all died. Therefore all things are of God who has reconciled us to Himself and given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

Woe unto us if we preach not the Gospel! That is the eschatological urgency that we need desperately to recover in modern preaching. The incredible thing is that by the very preaching of the Gospel some should be hardened, that the preaching of Christ crucified should be foolishness unto some while the power of God unto those who believe, that it should be a savour of life unto life, and death unto death. It is the infinite urgency of the situation that life and death hang in the balances and that it is possible to choose death as well as life. No doctrine that cuts the nerve of that urgency in the Gospel can be a doctrine of love, but only an abiding menace to the Gospel and to mankind.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Christian in Philosophy. By J. V. Langmead Casserley. Faber and Faber, pp. 266. 18s.

Mr. Casserley's aim in this valuable and stimulating book is to show what has been contributed to Western European philosophy by Christian thought and also what can be contributed now. It is not the familiar theme of the criticism of revealed religion by philosophy, but of the ideas that are given to philosophy by revealed religion, that is important for him.

He points out that Greek thought ignored the singular and individual in favour of the universal and abstract. Christianity, by developing the notion of the person, first remedied this defect in ancient thought. Again, the Christian idea of God went far beyond anything to be found in Plato, Aristotle, or Plotinus, although the Christian method of thinking by the way of negation and analogy was not radically different. What was at work, Mr. Casserley argues, was a process the very reverse of the anthropomorphism of which the atheist accuses the theist. According to the atheist, men invent gods in their own image. At certain stages this is true enough, and specially when a religion is falling into decay. However, the striking thing about Judaism and Christianity is that by degrees they have produced a theomorphic conception of man; in other words, God has taught men to see themselves in His image and discard other images. This is a most important point, because modern non-Christian thinkers either, logically, deny the Christian conception of man with horrible results, or, illogically, try to uphold the Christian conception of man without the foundations it rests on.

In dealing with medieval thought Mr. Casserley makes an interesting, though incidental, point. He says that if there is specifically Christian philosophy, *philosophia perennis*, it is not Thomism but the Platonism of St. Augustine, upheld by Anselm and Bonaventura in the middle ages and appearing in many later thinkers. St. Thomas he considers as essentially an apologist who saved the thirteenth century from intellectual schism, between a non-religious, naturalistic philosophy and a non-philosophical religion, by showing that the fundamental concepts of Aristotelianism were compatible with those of Christianity. This is well said; nevertheless it does seem as though Platonism could not out of its own resources meet the challenge of naturalistic modes of thought either in the thirteenth

or twentieth centuries, because it is not able to meet them on their own ground.

The new challenge which the seventeenth century had to meet was that of mathematical and physical science. As Mr. Casserley says, henceforth all philosophies were philosophies of science, rationalist if they followed the mathematical model, empiricist if modelled on experimental method. But at first they considered only the abstract and general. Vico alone in the early eighteenth century had an inkling of the meaning of history. It is with Kant that we come to the turning point. He not only gathered up the threads of earlier rationalist and empiricist thought but was aware of those further problems posed by Christian thought, the meaning of history and the place of the singular and personal. Mr. Casserley claims that Kant, for all the differences due to his age and special problems is in the Augustinian tradition. It seems at first sight a far cry from Hippo to Königsberg, but the connexion can hardly be denied. The next point Mr. Casserley makes will perhaps create more doubt. He divides subsequent European thought into three groups, all the result of developing and exaggerating one aspect of Kant, and considers that this classification excludes the neo-Thomists only. Kant said that all experience is mental construction. Hegel and the Idealists who follow him fasten on this and leave out compensating statements. Kant said that the theoretical reason employed in science is a limited instrument adapted for the interpretation of phenomena. The Positivists take this limited instrument as the whole of our mental equipment and leave out everything else. Kant said that moral experience brings us into direct contact with a reality which is not merely phenomenal. The Existentialists seize on this to the exclusion of everything else. This is valid criticism of extremists of all three parties, but surely there have been post-Kantian thinkers not tarred with the extremist brush? This label Existentialist is perhaps unfortunate. Certainly Kierkegaard made a necessary protest against the abstractness of Hegelian thought in favour of the concrete and immediate, as seen in moral choice. But he made his protest intemperately, confusedly, and at excessive length. His German followers have preserved the confusion and verbosity, and Sartre the intemperance, without any of them having Kierkegaard's excuse. I would suggest that Buber, whom Mr. Casserley does not mention, puts the matter far better and more clearly in his *I and Thou*. In any case existentialism alone might produce poetry or history but not philosophy, because philosophy needs the categories of abstract thought. These criticisms do not touch Mr. Casserley's main contention, that Christian thinking centres on concrete historical fact and the relations of persons as

persons, and that any philosophy which leaves these out stultifies itself.

Recently the Positivists have raised the important question of language, its limitations, use and misuse. But, as Mr. Casserley says, they assume that language ought always to be univocal and that the technicalities of the abstract sciences provide the sole true model for all rational discourse. In consequence, enquiries which might be fruitful tend to sink to pure verbalism. Christianity makes the claim that language, even written language which Plato held to be only a substitute for memory, can be the vehicle of revelation —the Word of God. Philosophy must be able to accommodate that claim unless it is to reject Christianity, and indeed any kind of religion worthy of the name. Judaism and Christianity make the claim in the most uncompromising way, but all religion, if it is not to be just private intuition or social ritual, claims that the transcendent can be spoken about. But, of course, it can be spoken about indirectly only, by saying what it is not and by way of analogy. That is just the difficulty; and there Mr. Casserley does not help us. Can there be valid analogy without identity? Plato thought there was a kind of identity. As Milton puts it:

> . . . and what surmounts the reach
> Of human sense I shall delineate so,
> By likening spiritual to corporal forms
> As may express them best—though what if Earth
> Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein
> Each to other like, more than on Earth is thought!

Even if Milton and Plato are right it is still a puzzle to see how Earth can be the shadow of Heaven, and how the words that describe the shadow can deal with the substance.

A. D. Ritchie

The Truth of Vision. By Max Warren. The Canterbury Press. 9s. 6d.

What is the end of missionary endeavour? Most of our foreign mission planning has been based on what Dr. Warren calls the eighteenth-century view (although it remained the prevalent view until the early days of this century), the view that "through the preaching of the Gospel all the world would in due course be converted and the Kingdom of God would then be co-extensive with mankind" (p. 44). This, as Dr. Warren points out, is the religious counterpart of "the belief in progress through education", and it is no accident that the most conspicuous institutions of the modern missionary movement are schools and colleges, imparting what would

be commonly regarded as a secular education. One of the factors which makes a reconsideration of the end to which we look forward so necessary to-day is that in many countries governments are assuming control over the educational, medical and social services in which missionaries were the pioneers.

There has been another answer to our question—that given by the view which Dr. Warren labels "Second Adventism". "On this view history has entered upon the 'last time'. Evil is about to make its final supreme effort. In the moment of its apparent triumph Christ will return, overthrow the powers of evil, establish His Kingdom, and then, after an interval, proceed to the Judgment which will bring the whole historic process to an end" (pp. 51, 52). Dr. Warren's own view, like that of most serious thinkers to-day, is nearer to the "Second-Adventist" view than the eighteenth-century view; he holds that the primary task of the Church is to prepare for the Kingdom of God, and that this does not consist in making all men Christian. He holds, however, in opposition to the Second Adventists, that "the Kingdom will come in history. If the temporal order cannot see the vindication of God, then His experiment with time has been a failure" (p. 135).

How are we to prepare for this? "If the 'end' of history is to be the revealing of the righteousness of God as finally vindicated, then preparation must be in accord with that 'end'. The preparatory work of preaching, teaching and baptizing . . . means a preparatory demonstration that God is righteous. It means men and women living demonstrably according to God's will and thus witnessing to the character of the God whom they worship and proclaim" (p. 136). The vindication of the righteousness of God, which is certainly an essential part of the Second Coming in Christian doctrine, is a notion that requires analysis. Do we mean by it merely that the good are to be rewarded and the bad punished; or do we mean, as the eighteenth-century view held, that the righteousness of God is to be established in every human heart; or, while we believe that there is to be a vindication, have we to admit that we do not know how God will vindicate His righteousness? In these circumstances the account given of the "end" in this book is necessarily too vague to enable us to plan a strategy of Christian missions as a preparation for that "end". Dr. Warren describes our present duty as a "combination of patient planning and urgent obedience"; it is certainly by our obedience that we can witness to the character of the God whom we worship and proclaim; but it is a little difficult to see how we are to plan patiently for an end of which we know so little.

Dr. Warren's argument that the Kingdom will come in history

is perhaps the most important and most convincing argument of the book, but, if we are to give history its due place, the preparation for the end must be a more integral part of the vindication of God's righteousness than this book suggests. The Church is not merely the preparation for the Kingdom, nor ought it to be, in Dr. Warren's words, "content to remain a means to an end". The Church is the Bride of Christ and has a place in the final consummation. It is in a very real sense the Kingdom of God here and now in our midst, and its worship and service are not merely ways of preparation for the final vindication, but in themselves within measure elements in the vindication of God's righteousness.

Dr. Warren, as we would expect from the secretary of one of the great missionary societies, has many wise things to say about mission policy in our own day, but these do not always seem to follow from the main thesis of the book, or even from what we may call the minor theses, such as the rhythm of withdrawal and return to activity or of detachment and devotion—a view that has certainly most important practical applications in mission policy. It seems inconsistent to advise decentralisation, and immediately, as a part of the same discussion, to advocate the strengthening of the national Christian Councils. In India, the National Christian Council can be strengthened only as it undertakes a more adequate supervision of the various pieces of Christian work going on there; but in a country as large as India, this means in practice centralisation rather than decentralisation. This is one reason why missionaries on the field sometimes do not show the enthusiasm for the National Christian Councils that their home boards seem to expect.

Our missionary strategy is still too much determined by the eighteenth-century view, and this book does not provide us with even the outlines of a new strategy. Indeed it is doubtful whether the vision of the coming of the Kingdom is being given to this generation; in the words of Habakkuk, whom Dr. Warren quotes so often, though the vision tarry, we must wait for it in constant obedience. In the meantime, all who think about the missionary enterprise will be grateful for this stimulating book. Even if it does not succeed in making clear the "end" or what we can do in preparation for it, it will certainly make every reader think freshly on these things. And there are some brilliantly illuminating descriptions of the perplexities of our time in chapter one, of the place of the Church as a minority in chapter four, and of the place of the Anglican Communion in Christ's Commonwealth in chapter six. Its analysis of present situations are throughout more satisfying than its speculations on the Christian Hope.

William Lillie.

Theology of Crisis. By Ulrich Simon. London, S.P.C.K., pp. 242. 15s.

Man living in time but conscious of eternity, man seeking some significance for his life, man grappling with the problems of his origin and his destiny, man aspiring after a perfection that keeps eluding him, man striving to be master of all things, man claiming freedom but aware of being bound if by nothing more than the result of his own past choices—these are some of the tensions that lie behind human life. Add to them the ultimate crisis of religion, the clash of the Creator and creation, and we have the material from which Mr. Ulrich Simon, Lecturer in Old Testament Exegesis and Hebrew in King's College, London, sets out to formulate a theology of crisis.

In two opening chapters Mr. Simon points to vestiges of crisis in the phenomenal world. Dealing with visible and invisible reality, science postulates the existence of change; the patterns which describe this process appear to point to a five-point cycle of Continuous Substance—Tension—Free Determination—Climax—Result. The same conditions of crisis pertain to human life. In man the emotional, moral, intellectual and aesthetic crises provide further vestiges and "at least point to a greater world, to a being which transcends their mere vestige reality".

From this point Mr. Simon is launched on his task which is, in his own words "to chase the shadows of crisis in the world of man". This occupies the main part of the book in which the theme is pursued from Old Testament revelation, through the Gospels, the Apostolic Church, Church History, the Enlightenment down to the New Theology of Crisis that has marked the twentieth century. For Biblical events the claim is made that while "other pages of history contain critical events . . . in the Bible the events are crises. They are not the endless ups and downs of a people. They are the *incognito* meeting-places of the transcendental issue in the secular world." The Gospel proclaims "the end of the God-man crisis in the positive message of redemption", but marks the beginning of a new crisis; for "every result opens up a new cycle of contradiction and tension. . . . This new crisis is the crisis of the Church. . . . The raw material of the Gospels, the given sinfulness, humanity, persecutions, rumours and wars, etc., is not laid aside, but perpetuated into the life of the Church." Church History shows clearly the tensions and contradictions that beset the Christian Community. The Enlightenment endeavoured to resolve these tensions by explaining them away. But while Protestant Theology was dispensing with any idea of crisis, "the nineteenth century generated the forces which have caused the origin and growth of what is now technically

known as the 'theology of crisis' ". Typical of the new spirit of crisis is Nietzsche. The significance of Nietzsche lies in the fact that he presents us with "the extreme form of a humanism which makes man the only measure of all things" and "the human will, with which Christian theology had been so well acquainted, is now made to bear the whole world and is crushed under its weight. . . . The doom of the Nietzschean crisis is evidently due to its failure to produce that change which it had set out to bring about."

It was the task of "answering the questions of the tragic night, of Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, Dostojevski, and Nietzsche" that led to the New Theology of Crisis, initiated by Karl Barth when, with the publication of his commentary on Romans he "rang the church bell at night"—though others are beginning to claim that Dr. P. T. Forsyth in England had already been ringing it when he began offering for a time of crisis "a faith more profound in its note, more tragic in its tone, and more redemptive in its effect". However, it is Barth that Mr. Simon regards as the first to proclaim the new theology of crisis. He sets aside as missing the mark the current criticisms of Barth, claiming that the real problem lies in a different direction.

> It is not only the debatable point whether the *analogia entis* is true or not. . . . It is not only that Barth is unduly harsh and impatient in his condemnation of mysticism. The real core of the problem that awaits solution is how Barth conceives of crisis altogether. . . . The Word of God is decisive, no doubt. But what of man, of whose incapacity for a righteous decision we are well aware? If he makes no decision which is truly his own, we cannot speak of a real crisis at all. The Word of God is then the coercion of God who forces man to decide for Him. On the other hand, if we postulate a real freedom in that decision, we approach again the terrors of Pelagianism. We are back again at the verge of the old problem of the freedom of the will.

With this realisation of the importance of freedom—"the rehabilitation of freedom is a theological pearl of the greatest price" —Mr. Simon devotes a chapter to its consideration; but it is not so clear whether he satisfactorily establishes it, and his claim that "the theology of crisis can beat all its optimistic and Pelagian-humanist opponents" in the matter is perhaps a little jejune.

In a concluding chapter he passes in review the many problems that the theology of crisis raises—the problem of humanism, of the Church and the Kingdom of God, of power in the Church, of institutionalism, of mysticism where he claims that

> the theology of crisis has a right and a duty to come to terms with Christian mysticism. . . . To dismiss the facts of mystical experience would be as blind as to ignore its particular weaknesses. . . . It is on the recreated man, the

thing which has become a free Person, that the implications of the theology of crisis must be centred. The Barthian antagonism to mysticism as well as the general exclusion of mysticism from systematic theology is not only a mistake but a hopeless distortion of the whole issue. Soteriology is the science of the creation of the new man and mysticism describes the actual procedure.

He ends with an Either-Or: "Either God is dead and man is alone in his strange universe, left alone to his own devices, . . . or God is the living Lord who is both the Beginning and the End of all creation, and especially of man, whose true end is to feel, to will, to know and to enjoy his Perfection, and to become perfect through the Transcendent Act."

There is much that is helpful and valuable in this book. Its chapters on the Old and New Testaments and on Church History provide useful summaries and starting points for further study. But it is too full of, one might almost say, a jargon, to have any wide appeal outside the circle of theological students. What, for example, is even the Church member to make of: "It is for the Church to arrive at free and personal decisions to use the crisis-continuum with eschatological urgency and awareness?" Is it not possible without diminishing the content of theology to present it in terms that will challenge the thought of the world outside the Church? But Mr. Simon has also clear, striking, thought-provoking sentences and shrewd judgments: "The worst thing that can befall a religion is to get tired of its inherent tensions, and to arrange for a working agreement which traditionalises the past and then loses its meaning." "The glory of Judaism is its courage to be incomplete, to remain a waiting religion." "If Jesus be not the Messiah, then the decision of the Sanhedrin is one of the few really just acts in the history of legal administration." "It is easier to follow a code than a man like Jesus." "If Church history has any meaning, it is to be found in the lesson of sectarian failure as an answer to the problem of freedom in the Church." "The mystery of the world is that it 'exists' truly only through the mediation of persons, and that at the same time it is thoroughly impersonal." The full list of non-biblical names is evidence of Mr. Simon's wide reading but there are two striking omissions—Dr. P. T. Forsyth and Baron von Hügel. The former is perhaps not surprising; it is only now that he is being recognised. The omission of Baron von Hugel is surprising, considering the stress that he lays on the tensions of life and also his strong emphasis on the mystical element in religion.

William C. Bigwood.

The Office of a Bishop. Four Essays. Foreword by Canon M. A. C. Warren. Church Book Room Press, London. 1s. 6d.

As Canon Warren truly says in his Foreword, these essays, reprinted from *The Churchman* of June 1948, merit the careful consideration of those who can appreciate a reasonable scholarship presenting its conclusions with temperance and moderation. Rev. C. F. D. Moule discusses some aspects of the Apostolate in the New Testament with special reference to the alleged Apostolic Succession of Bishops; and concludes that "any theory which regards an episcopate authorised by apostolic succession as a *sine qua non* (of the Church) is simply unbiblical and arbitrary". Rev. H. Chadwick examines the episcopacy of the second century as evidenced by the documents emanating from Rome, Antioch and Alexandria. He believes that the fundamental position of Lightfoot can still be reasonably held as the most satisfactory interpretation of the evidence, which however "is totally insufficient to allow dogmatic assertion of continuous sacramental succession." The Bishop of Truro expounds The Anglican Pattern of Episcopacy as laid down in the *Ordinal*, the *Thirty-nine Articles* and the writings of leading Anglican divines from the Reformation to the Tractarians. Finally Rev. F. J. Taylor, borrowing a phrase from Hooker—The Sacred Regiment of Bishops—describes the ideal of a bishop entertained by evangelical Anglicans.

It is valuable to have this testimony from a group that is evidently loyal to the traditional Anglican position, and for that reason as well as others refuses to "unchurch" those who have apparently "dispensed with episcopacy". Whether that is the exact way to describe what was done at the Reformation outside of England may be doubted. What was dispensed with was not episcopacy but episcopacy in the form in which it was known in Northern Europe during the Middle Ages. And it was dispensed with in order to provide an effective pastorate. England preserved the medieval form of ministry and Hooker defended it, and to-day, whatever may have been the case in the past, the Anglican Pattern of Episcopacy as set forth in these Essays is interesting, attractive and instructive.

John H. S. Burleigh

Sichtbare Kirche. By Rudolf Stickelberger. Zwingli Verlag, Zürich, 1948.

It is obvious that everyone should know the story of his own denomination; but one does not really understand or appreciate one's own Church unless one can fit it into the framework of general

Church history. This provides perspective. The cause of ecumenical unity and its higher purpose "that the world may believe" would be promoted if individuals could see the Christian community into which circumstances even more than choices have introduced them, as an emphasis, along with, and compatible with, other emphases, within a theological and ecclesiastical whole that has something about it of the fulness of Christ.

The task, however, of supplying the ordinary man with an outline of religious history is an extremely difficult one. Volumes may be produced on a single personality or epoch or area or even incident, but to condense all this, and give within brief space a valid impression of what the Christian Church has amounted to in human experience certainly requires much more than ordinary knowledge and wisdom.

Various attempts have been made. Thus Williston Walker crammed an amazing amount of information into one textbook, and G. P. Fisher provided a sober summary in a single substantial volume. For the student Heussi's remarkable *Kompendium* remains indispensable. Recently in Holland the learned Professors Bakhuizen van den Brink and Lindeboom have produced a *Kerkgeschiedenis* (1946) of similar type with an extensive bibliography; but such works, while useful for examination purposes or as a starting point for detailed study, might not meet the needs of the less determined reader. R. H. Nichols in America has written a brief textbook for young people (*The Growth of the Christian Church*, 2nd ed., 1941) which provides a very clear sketch. Great service has also been rendered by Edwyn Bevan in his *Christianity*, though a small book like this is perhaps of greater value to those who know something of the subject than as an introduction. For those who read Dutch there is H. Berkhof's *Geschiedenis der Kerk* (1946), attractively produced and well illustrated, compiled mostly under concentration camp conditions, but scholarly and very interestingly written, a helpful contribution to popular study. And there are of course other general surveys, English and foreign.

Now from Switzerland comes *Sichtbare Kirche* by Rudolf Stickelberger which the author describes as "Kirchengeschichte für jedermann". The volume is admirably produced and extensively illustrated, and the writing is colourful and dramatic. There is real need for books of this kind to interest the general public. The difficulty for the author is to draw the line between the manner of the researcher and the manner of the journalist: to have both quality of goods and effective salesmanship. The historical artist must select judiciously from an enormous quantity of material, ruthlessly omitting much that might claim to be important, and giving due

preference to effective information, while at the same time setting himself a high standard of accuracy and exercising a shrewd sense of values. It is the old problem of integrating what people want with what people need. Stickelberger's book is of the edifying rather than the academic type, and the author has evidently in mind a public that will be attracted by a vivid picture, a sentimental story, an interesting anecdote. He has a good eye for what is *news*, and so we have the last words of Oecolampadius, Catharine de Medici's little moustache, and General Wrangel stamping on his feathered hat, rather than any study of cause, effect and periodicity in connexion with Gnosticism or Mysticism, or any attempt to explain the Reformation and Counter-reformation as the Church's response to a world change analogous to that which faces us to-day. Space is given to the incident of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, but not to the problem of *imperium in imperio*. Fifteen lines are given to the death of Philip II, but there is no mention of the Synod of Dort or of the subsequent history of Christianity in Holland. And more room is found for Hieronymous d'Annone than for Calvin.

Obviously a serious problem to be faced by the writer of a book which covers so long a period is that of proportion. There has sometimes been a tendency to concentrate upon the history of the Early Church and to ignore recent movements. From this Latourette, for example, notably departs, devoting one volume to the first 500 years and three to the last 150. This represents his view of the relative significance of the periods as far as expansion is concerned; but independently of such a consideration there is something to be said for dealing rapidly with early stages, gradually reducing the pace and observing in more detail as one advances towards the present. Thus Stickelberger gives less than 60 pages out of some 400 to the period from St Paul to Gregory the Great, perhaps an extreme case of foreshortening.

It seems natural that Berkhof's picture of the universal Church should give some prominence to Dutch affairs, and that in the Bishop of London's *History of the Modern Church* England should play a large part. So we find Stickelberger writing avowedly as "Reformierter Schweitzer" and allotting considerable space to a really interesting account of the Reformation in Switzerland, one result being that Niklaus Manuel bulks more largely in the volume than St Augustine. The Church History of England receives only spasmodic attention, there being, for example, no reference to the Oxford Movement. A relatively small place is also devoted to America, while the Eastern Orthodox Churches are not discussed, nor is there any emphasis on the epoch-making fact of the "Younger Churches". Scotland is no doubt an almost invisible point in world history and

it would be presumptuous to imagine that Christians generally would be interested in the Covenanters or Thomas Chalmers; but it is disappointing to have Columba and Columbanus confused and to find the single page which Stickelberger devotes to Scottish history most inaccurate and misleading.

Towards the end the book becomes scrappy. One paragraph recognises the importance of Nietzsche; another gives an interesting account of Vinet; there is more extended information about *Innere Mission* in Switzerland and particularly the work of Spittler; several of the American sub-Christian sects are briefly described; and the book concludes with a short chapter on Swiss foreign mission work and the China Inland Mission. Karl Barth and Amsterdam do not come into the story but are noted in the *Zeittafel* at the end.

One would have liked if the book's edification design had perhaps led up to some picture of the world Church in its wonderful unity and diversity, matured by experience through the centuries, developed under distinguished and saintly leadership, and, in spite of weaknesses and repeated failures, guided to fuller consciousness of responsibility in face of the spiritual, intellectual, social, economic and political problems of these challenging days. One would have liked something more systematic, more critical, more philosophical, more impartial, more relevant. But the answer to all this fault-finding and querulousness must be that selection and proportion are largely matters of opinion; that space was extremely limited; that a most readable book has been produced which many people will enjoy very much; that a serious and indeed urgent need is thus at least partially met; and that if anyone thinks that he can do precisely what is wanted better than this book does it, by all means let him try.

G. D. Henderson.

Revision or New Translation? "The Revised Standard Version of 1946." A Comparative Study. By Oswald T. Allis. The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia. $2.

This book consists of a sustained onslaught against the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament which was published in 1946. As the title indicates, the main charge is that the Revised Standard Version, while it purports to be a revision of the Authorised Version (and of its previous revision in the American Standard Version of 1901), makes changes of so radical a nature that it becomes in effect a new translation. The author is in the enviable position of knowing exactly where revision ends and new translation

begins. Revision, it appears, consists of changing only such words as are erroneous or no longer intelligible, while literally rendering the original and even preserving the order of words. Whatsoever is more than that cometh of evil. Thus to substitute "was the father of" for "begat", and "deportation" for "carrying away", is to exceed the bounds of revision and enter the realm of new translation. Even where the plain sense of the original cannot be conveyed in English without the insertion of additional words, it is a fault if these are not indicated by italics: in Luke 20.37, for example, the makers of the Revised Standard Version are guilty of handling the word of God deceitfully when they render "in the passage about the bush", because, although this is the undisputed meaning of the Greek, they disguise the fact that the original is literally "at the bush" . . . and so on for the space of 50,000 words.

It is of course inevitable that in a broadside of such dimensions some of the missiles should find their target. The Revised Standard Version is by no means beyond criticisms: it is curiously inconsistent, as the author of this work does not fail to point out; it has the temerity to come to decisions on some passages of doubtful interpretation; and sometimes it is just careless. Dr. Allis has subjected it to a minute and painstaking examination, and moreover he plainly has at his command a degree of exact scholarship. But he shoots so wildly in all directions that the effect of his hits is altogether obscured by the dust raised by his misses. And the absence of a single word of praise for the occasional felicities of the Revised Standard Version betrays the fact that the author is actuated by an initial prejudice against it—or rather two prejudices: (1) he is one of those who "like the quaint, distinctive, Biblical way of putting things", which they find in the old versions, and who do "not want the Bible to read just like any other book"; and (2) he dislikes the theological position of the majority of the revisers, as he reveals in a candid appendix; they do not believe "the Biblical doctrine of the plenary inspiration and divine authority of Scripture". What could we expect from such misguided men?

GEORGE S. HENDRY

The Psalms, Translated and Interpreted in the Light of Hebrew Life and Worship. By ELMER A. LESLIE. New York. Nashville, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949. 448 pages. $5.

THIS book gives an excellent translation and commentary which endeavour to render the meaning which the Psalms had in the minds of their composers. The rendering is based upon the research which scholars have conducted upon the Hebrew text since the

beginning of the critical period of Old Testament study; and to be particularly welcomed is that in places where that text is corrupt or doubtful, the critical apparatus of Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica* (3rd ed.) has received appreciation, and also that extensive use has been made of the most complete and competent work on the psalter, Gunkel's *Die Psalmen*. The writer's work aims at giving the best results of Hebrew study to the reader who has no, or little, knowledge of Hebrew, and who has no means of judging the merits of the emendations of the text which are offered—to say nothing of the merit of the interpretations that are given.

That it may become apparent what part the Psalms played in Hebrew life and worship, the author—and here we perceive the influence of Gunkel's fine literary sense—has arranged the Psalms according to their literary types. Thus there can be distinguished at a glance the various kinds of hymns and of psalm-liturgies, the national and congregational laments, the king-psalms, the thanksgiving-songs, the prayer-psalms (e.g. of persons falsely accused, the sick or penitent) and the Wisdom-poems and songs of trust. This presentation of the contents of the psalter, in the light it sheds on the living religion of Israel and on those *motifs* which gave it depth and power, amply compensates for our not finding each psalm in the numerical order in which it appears in the Bible. Another pleasing characteristic of Dr. Leslie's method of exegesis is that each psalm is given a title and each portion of the poem in turn receives elucidation, so that the thought of the reader progresses from one group of verses to the next and preserves the sense of the logical development of the whole. Account also is taken, on behalf of the reader who has religious-historical interests, of the fact that the psalmody of Israel has affinities with that of the Middle East, with Egypt and Babylonia.

When we turn to the question of the interpretation of the Psalms, it will be granted that much depends on the notion of the stage of the development of belief which forms their background. Certain expositors, for instance, have been ready to see in various passages (16.10 f; 17.15; 49.16; 73.24, 26; 118.17), references to a life after death. Some interpret these verses in this sense in the so-thought interests of "piety". In fact, generations of men, both Jew and Christian, convinced of the truth of immortality, are bound to find in many a sentence from the psalter much that is suggestion of their belief. But Dr. Leslie for the most part displays here a commendable restraint. Of Psalm 73 (ver. 24, 26) he states that the writer "by his deep spiritual experience of being held in the grasp of God and by the certainty that in the end he will be received in honour at God's hands, advances the faith of Israel

towards immortality." This statement in which Dr. Leslie puts the word *towards* in italics is modest and altogether justified. However, on Psalm 49.16 ("But God will ransom my soul. From the power of Sheol, for He will take me") we meet with a more positive pronouncement that the psalmist now makes "a leap of faith" to the belief in immortality. The verse on which this judgment is based does not exhibit a very high degree of relevancy to the theme of the poem and has been regarded very generally by scholars as a glossator's addition to the text (see Oesterley, *Psalms ad loc*). But whether it be a gloss or not, there is no certainty at all that the verse signifies more than the assurance that God will save the writer of the verse from the immediate danger of death (so Gunkel). The distresses of the soul, the sicknesses and perils of the body can be described by the Hebrew *Sheol* (Underworld). The word "hell" in English with its very wide connotation has a parallel usage. Nevertheless, even should Dr. Leslie's verdict on Psalm 49.16 seem to some to be lacking in caution, on those other passages which have frequently been held to refer to a resurrection or to immortality, he shows himself in no way disposed to walk in the path of the wishful thinker.

Worthy of note in Dr. Leslie's work is that there is no description of any psalm as "messianic". Instead, we discover that the Psalms 47, 68, 93, 96, 97, 98, 99 are entitled "hymns of the enthronement of the Lord" (Jahweh) and that the Psalms 2, 21, 72, 101, 110, 132 are interpreted as "New Year songs and prayers for the reigning monarch". Half-a-century ago A. F. Kirkpatrick (*Cambridge Bible*), critical of expositors who regarded certain of the "Royal Psalms" as prophecies of the "Messianic King", saw that psalms such as 2 and 45 appeared to be written about contemporary events. Now, through the attention which has been drawn to the literary types of poems in the psalter, and since Mowinckel has discerned that the enthronement of Jahweh as king was a religious rite of the Hebrew New Year festival, a much more convincing place and a more natural interpretation have been found in this Hebrew ceremony, liturgy and worship for those psalms which formerly were taken as speaking of a future messianic figure or messianic age. The later Jewish tradition which claimed a number of psalms as messianic, and which early Christianity accepted, belongs to the history of interpretation. But since the task of the *exegete* is to set forth what the writers of the psalms themselves were speaking of, it will gradually become evident that the liturgical and festival setting of psalms that were hitherto held to be messianic provides a more adequate exposition of their content.

The limitations which this work has imposed upon itself by

seeking to give the layman the best gleanings of the sustained study of scholars since the beginning of the critical period of Old Testament research, involve necessarily a complete absence of prolonged or technical discussion on any point. Decision in the choice of interpretation is made without indication of the differences of opinion that exist among those who have knowledge of the original text. But throughout the choice of interpretation has been made judicially. The diction of the translation is exceedingly good and an attempt has been made to retain the rhythmic stresses of Hebrew poetry in one English prose. The rendering (Psalm 92.6) "A dumb man does not know" (A.V., R.V., a brutish man) is perhaps the only example in the book of a term which sounds strange to a person on this side of the Atlantic. For him who has no Hebrew this work might well be judged to be the best upon the psalter that is available to the English layman and for the Hebraist it will prove a very handy companion and supplement to the best commentaries.

O. S. RANKIN.

The Revision of the Psalter. An Essay in Liturgical Reform. By HAROLD RILEY. S.P.C.K. 8s. 6d.

1949 MARKS the centenary of the first Prayer-Book of Edward the Sixth and it is appropriate that much thought should be given at this time to the revision and enrichment of the greatest English book of devotion. For the last few years, the Church of England has been experimenting in the use of new Lectionaries. Three years ago Dr. Oscar Hardman issued a valuable and interesting three-volume revision of the whole Prayer Book in the sanguine hope that 1949 would see an authoritative revision which should supersede the book of 1662. And now the Secretary of the Church Union gives us a scholarly revision and rearrangement for liturgical use of the Prayer-Book Psalter. Added interest attaches to this volume by reason of the fact that the new B.B.C. version of portions of the Psalter for use in the daily services is based on Mr. Riley's version.

A rapid glance through this book might lead one to think that little alteration had been made on Coverdale's version, but Mr. Riley assures us that more than two thousand alterations have been made in the text. Immense labour must have gone to the work, which can be appreciated only by careful reading and regular use. Mr. Riley suggests that we compare his version with that of Monsignor Ronald Knox, to see where they correspond and where they diverge, but the two Psalters are radically different. Monsignor Knox's is a new translation—deliberately a very free translation of a new Latin translation of the Hebrew, and it has a freshness, an almost startling effect, which one cannot expect to find

here, for this is still Coverdale's version, however altered. Deep no longer calleth unto deep at the noise of his water-pipes; they that are of the house of the Lord are no longer wished good luck; but the Psalter is still that which is so firmly rooted in the affections of Anglicans throughout the world. A careful comparison with Dr. Hardman's version would be interesting. It has a valuable feature not present here in the brief descriptive headings attached to each Psalm. (Similar descriptive headings, of very great value, are attached to the lessons in the Rev. Ralph Houghton's *Introductions to the Amended Lectionary*, O.U.P., 1946).

Mr. Riley's arrangement will provoke more criticism than his translation. Something of a fetish seems to have been made of mere neatness. The desire for an equal portion of the Psalter at each service has led to unfamiliar sub-division and rearrangement and the table of "proper" Psalms for every Sunday which was certainly one of the more valuable elements in the book of 1928 is set aside on what seem to us quite inadequate grounds. Mr. Riley claims to have kept "the needs of ordinary Parish Churches always in mind", and yet he seems to assume that ordinary worshippers will be present both at Matins and Evensong, although no one knows better than the Secretary of the Church Union that Matins is no longer the people's service in thousands of churches. One would greatly wish to see some attempt made to distribute the treasures in such a way that throughout the year the ordinary worshipper would really become familiar with most of them. This book will prove more valuable for private devotion than for public use; it will repay concentrated study, and it may also serve to remind the non-liturgical communions of how meagre a use they generally make of the Psalter. J. Wilson Baird.

Prophet and Nation. By E. L. Allen. Nisbet, London: 1947. pp. 144. 7s. 6d.

In his posthumously published *Two Hebrew Prophets* Dr. Wheeler Robinson writes: "In the ancient world, politics and religion were much more closely linked than for ourselves; indeed, they were often but different aspects and interpretations of the same events. . . . When we speak, therefore, of the historical background of an ancient book we are not describing tapestry hangings on the wall, which simply give colour to the scene; we must think rather of the courtyard of a castle with living figures advancing and withdrawing, all of them concerned with both political and religious interests, even though some were primarily what we should call politicians, and other prophets or priests".

It is a similar point of view which is taken in *Prophet and Nation.*

To Dr. Allen the prophets were not simply men of religion; they were also great lovers of their country. And it was by the clash of these two, Jahweh's will as they saw it, and the nation's response to that will, to which they could not close their eyes, that their prophetic task was conditioned. For, as the history of the Kingdoms proceeded, and the prophets' two loyalties became more and more irreconcilable, until finally the old link between God and people could only be regarded as broken, their task became to forge a new link which should once again bring the two together. Dr. Allen studies the way in which the conflict of loyalties presented itself to the six greatest of the prophets, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Second Isaiah, and examines the reconciliation to which each came, or rather, to which each reached out, a reconciliation achieved finally in the Church.

Dr. Allen's book will be welcomed by many ministers not only for the thesis which it offers, but for the admirable account of the personalities and teaching of the six prophets dealt with which it contains. Two chapters will be of particular interest, those on Isaiah and Second Isaiah. In the first, Dr. Allen dwells on the importance of "Remnant" conception in Isaiah's thought, an element perhaps too little remembered, if the theology of the Old Testament is to be written, as it seems it would, round the fact of the Community, the People of God. In the second, a view of the Servant is offered which is not that which is generally accepted in this country. Dr. Allen considers that the Servant is in some sense identified with the prophet—"The Servant personifies Second Isaiah's sense of mission; he represents the role for which he knows himself to be cast"—and that the poems "are to be read as a reflection of the prophet's self-consciousness, not in the sense that they describe what he was doing, but as depicting the role which he felt himself called to assume, portraying what would be true of him in such measure as he was able to respond to the divine intention in his life. In most of the poems, therefore, he speaks of the Servant as one with whom he seeks to identify himself, and so preserves a certain distance between himself and this ideal figure". Dr. Allen also finds seven, and not four, Servant Songs, to be read in the order given, 49.8-13, 49.1-6, 52.1-4, 52.5-7 or 9, 50.4-9 or 11, 49.7, 52.13, 53.12, the second last being a first draft of the last.

In his preface Dr. Allen says: "If any justification is needed for another book on the prophets of Israel, it can surely be found in the fact that recent events have brought us so near to them." This sense of "relevance" is apparent, though never obtruded, all through this fine book. Preacher and thinker alike will find much to stimulate them in it.

D. M. G. Stalker.

CALVIN'S CONCEPT OF REVELATION

by The Rev. T. H. L. PARKER

II

The Revelation of God the Redeemer

In his commentary on John 1.1 Calvin distinguishes between the words *sermo* (word) and *verbum* (word). The Greek text runs: ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, and for the translation of ὁ λόγος "Latin theology wavered between *verbum*, *sermo* and *ratio* before accepting *verbum*, the least satisfactory, perhaps, of the three."[1] *Verbum* was used in the Vulgate. Erasmus, however, went back to *sermo* in his translation, and Calvin followed him. "In the beginning was the Word" (*sermo*). In a brief note he justifies the word: "I wonder what induced the Latins to render ὁ λόγος by *verbum*; for that would have been the translation of τὸ ῥῆμα. But granting that they had some plausible reason, yet it cannot be denied that *sermo* would have been far more appropriate."[2] It would seem as if we have here the basis for a distinction universal in his writings and upon which a consistent doctrine could be constructed. In fact, we have nothing of the sort, for Calvin uses the two words indiscriminately, even to the extent of using *verbum* when he quotes John 1.1! The most that can be said is that he always seems to couple "eternal" (*aeternus*) and *sermo* together, and never "eternal" (*aeternum*) and *verbum*, and that, on the whole, he uses *sermo* rather than *verbum* as the synonym for the "wisdom of God" (*sapientia Dei*), though there are exceptions.

"What does Scripture mean by *verbum Dei*?" asks Calvin in *Institutio* 1.13.7-8. Certainly not simply *vox Dei*—the transient sound of God's voice spoken into the air, like the "oracles" and "prophecies" which He spoke to the patriarchs; but rather "there is indicated the eternal Wisdom dwelling with God, whence all the oracles and prophecies proceeded".[3] Behind the

[1] W. R. Inge, *Logos* in H.E.R.E. 8, pp. 134-3
[2] *Comm. on John* 1.1, Calvin Translation Soc., 1, p. 28.
[3] *Inst.* 1.13.7.

word expressed is the word thought. This is what he means by *sapientia* or *aeternus sermo*. The Word was with God as His eternal Wisdom. This Wisdom God expressed in the creation, for God created by the Word, which here means "the bidding or commandment of the Son, who is Himself the eternal and essential *Sermo Patris*".[1] As of the creation, so of every revelation of God. Revelation must not be understood as anything but the Word of God—that is, as the *verbum Dei* which is the temporal expression of the *sapientia Dei* or the *aeternus sermo Dei*. "Therefore, as all revelations proceeding from God do well bear the name of the word of God, so ought we yet to set in the highest place the substantial Word, the fountain of all oracles, which being subject to no alteration, abideth always one and the self same with God, and is God himself."[2]

This is developed in the *Commentary on John* 1.1 There is in the Word of God, says Calvin, a two-fold relation (*duplex relatio*); it relates on the one hand to God, in that it is eternally "with God", and on the other hand to men, in that it is the revelation of God to men. In this consists the Scriptural meaning of the Word of God: "first, because He is the eternal Wisdom and Will of God; and secondly, because He is the clear image of His purpose (*expressa consilii eius effigies*); for, as speech is said among men to be the image of the mind, so it is not inappropriate to apply this to God, and to say that He expresses Himself to us by His Word spoken."[3] In His relation to God the Word was hidden and incomprehensible; in His relation to men He is revealed and known.

The second Person of the Trinity is to be called not only the Word or the Wisdom of God, but also the Son of God; and He is a subsistence in the Divine essence, related to the Father and to the Holy Spirit, and yet distinguished from them by incommunicable property.[4] This is no bare academic concept for Calvin, but one of the points upon which Christianity and our salvation stand. The essence of the Son is the essence of God. He is of the same essence with the Father and the Holy Ghost. If it were not so, revelation would either not be revelation by the Word, or it would not be the revelation of God Himself. The *relatio* of the Son to the Father and the Spirit, or

[1] *Inst.* 1.13.7.
[2] *Inst.* 1.13.7.
[3] *Comm. on John* 1.1, C.T.S. p. 26.
[4] *Inst.* 1.13.6.

that which is common between them, is Godhead: "We particularly use the word *relatio* here. For when there is simple and indefinite mention made of God, this name belongeth no less to the Son and the Holy Ghost than to the Father."[1]

As well as the relatedness there exists a distinction of incommunicable properties between the Persons of the Godhead, which consists in this—"that to the Father is attributed the beginning of working, the fountain and spring of all things: to the Son, wisdom, counsel, and the very disposition in the doing of things: to the Holy Ghost is assigned power and effectual working."[2] But this *distinctio* must always be considered in connexion with the *relatio*. There can obviously, since the essence of God is simple, be no question of one Person working in isolation. Every work of God is the work of the entire Godhead. Certainly the Son, and not the Father, died on the Cross: but He died there at the Father's will. Certainly the Word and the Spirit are not identical: but they work together and not apart from one another.

So, then, revelation is the activity of God Himself working by His Word, or Son, or Wisdom. When the Word becomes revelation, it means that He assumes a form which is a contact with men, and that this form reveals the whole Godhead. So far, although the doctrine of the blessed Trinity is specifically Christian, we have not treated it in the specifically Christian way—that is to say, in the way that transforms it from a philosophical theory of God into the unique Christian knowledge of God. This we do by declaring that the Second Person of the Trinity, the Son, Word or Wisdom of God, is to be identified with Jesus of Nazareth. "Christ is the same Word clad with flesh,"[3] says Calvin, echoing John 1.14. Here we need only notice that Calvin does so identify the eternal Word with Jesus, without following him through the proofs from Scripture that he gives in *Institutio* 1.13.9 ff. When we think of the Word of God, we are not to imagine an unknown Being; we are to think of Jesus of Nazareth. Any revelation of God in the Old Testament was an appearance of Jesus Christ before His Incarnation. He it was who "was always exhibited to the holy fathers under the Law, as the object to which they should direct their faith."[4]

[1] *Inst.* 1.13.6.
[2] *Inst.* 1.13.18.
[3] *Inst.* 1.13.9.
[4] *Inst.* 2.6.2.

Before His appearance in the flesh, however, Christ was known only indistinctly. And yet with increasing clarity:

> For God kept this distribution and order in disposing the covenant of His mercy, that how much the nearer it drew on in process of time to the full performance thereof, with so much greater increase of revelation, He did day by day more brightly shew it. Therefore at the beginning when the first promise of salvation was made unto Adam, there glistened out but as it were small sparkles of it. After, having more added unto it, a greater largeness of light began to be put forth: which from thenceforth brake out more and more, and displayed her brightness farther abroad, till at length all the clouds were driven away, and Christ the Sun of righteousness fully enlightened the whole world.[1]

The identification of Jesus with the eternal Word of God means that He is the true revelation of God. On the one hand, as the eternal Word He is God, and therefore His appearing is the appearing of God. If He were not God, the representation would be false: in Him we should see the image of something, but not of God. As it is, He is the *imago patris*. On the other hand, His humanity, the form of the revelation, provides the proximity of God to man without which man, unable to rise above his humanity, cannot know God. In Jesus Christ God becomes near to men. But the Word did not become flesh merely for reasons of intelligibility, as if man had only to have God presented to him in a way that he could understand, to know Him. Whereas in fact a change is needed in man himself before he can know God. The revelation of Jesus Christ is the revelation of the forgiveness of sins by God in Jesus Christ. It is a revelation that is in itself redemption.

> Paul means not only that Christ is the pledge of all the blessings that God has ever promised, but that we have in Him a full and complete exhibition of them.... And indeed, the freely bestowed adoption, by which we are made sons of God, as it proceeds from the good pleasure which the Father had from eternity, has been revealed to us in this respect, that Christ (who alone is the Son of God by nature) has clothed Himself with our flesh and made us His brethren.[2]

Calvin treats these two ideas—of the nearness of God in Christ, and revelation as redemption—together. It was necessary for Christ to humble His estate to that of manhood because man was unable to exalt himself to fellowship with God.

[1] *Inst.* 2.10.20.
[2] *Argument to Commentary on Harmony of Gospels*, C.T.S. 1, p. 36.

And that, not only because God is transcendent and inaccessible, but far more because our sins remove us from God's gracious presence and hide Him from us. Unless, then, Christ should come to us, and as God and man be a Mediator to reconcile us to God, we should have no hope. Emmanuel, God with us, means the redemptive proximity of God: God hath visited—and redeemed His people. "Scripture commonly says that God is with us when He is present with us in His help and grace, and puts forth the power of His arm to protect us. But here is expressed the way in which God communicates with men, for outside Christ we are alienated from Him; but by Christ we are not only received into His grace, but we are made one with Him."[1] Elsewhere he calls Christ "the mirror of the inestimable grace of God" (*speculum inaestimabilis Dei gratiae*).[2]

Apart from Christ we have no knowledge of God, no salvation, no blessings from God. Apart from Him we wander in a maze; if seeking God, ever seeking, never finding. Who is God? He is the Father of Jesus Christ, in whom He has revealed Himself.

> Now this is a remarkable sentence, and ought to be reckoned among the first axioms of our religion: yea, when we have confessed that there is one true God, this second article ought necessarily to be added, that He is no other but He who is made known to us in Christ. The Apostle does not here treat distinctly of the unity of essence. It is, indeed, certain that the Son cannot be disunited from the Father, for He is of the same essence (ὁμοούσιος); but another thing is spoken of here: that is, that the Father, who is invisible, has revealed Himself only in His Son. Hence He is called the image of the Father (Heb. 1.3) because He sets forth and exhibits to us all that is necessary to be known of the Father. For the naked majesty of God would, by its immense brightness, ever dazzle our eyes; it is therefore necessary for us to look on Christ. . . . John calls us to this practical part of faith, that as God has given Himself to us to be enjoyed only in Christ, He is elsewhere sought for in vain; or (if anyone prefers what is clearer) that as in Christ dwells all the fulness of the Deity, there is no God apart from Him.[3]

Jesus of Nazareth is the revelation of God. What does this mean? That in Him, God revealed Himself visibly. He is the "visible representation", or the "lively image", of the invisible God: "the Son is said to know the Father, not because he reveals him by his Spirit, but because, being the lively image of

[1] *Comm. on Matt.* 1.23, pp. 48-49 (Geneva. 1563). [2] *Inst.* 2.14.5.
[3] *Comm. on 1 John* 2.22. C.T.S. p. 196.

him, he represents him visibly in his own person."[1] We have already discussed the concept of *image* in regard to the revelation in the Creation. "The universe," we said, "is a mirror in which is to be seen the *effigies dei*; or in other words, it is the image of God." The same terminology Calvin uses of Jesus Christ, for it is a fundamental idea in his doctrine of revelation. He, the Word made flesh, is a mirror reflecting the *effigies dei*, and hence, He is the image of God. But although the same terminology is used, a different meaning is given to it. The universe is the *speculum dei* because it is His creation and bears the marks of His workmanship. It is the *imago dei* because it is the *speculum dei*—and not the converse. That is to say, its position as the mirror of God confers upon it the title of being the image of God, which is not proper to it. With Jesus, however, the precise opposite is true. He is the *speculum dei* because He is, in Himself as the eternal Word made flesh, the *imago dei*. He reflects the *effigies dei* because He is Himself God.

Who is the image of the invisible God. He mounts up higher in discoursing of the glory of Christ. He calls Him the image of the invisible God, meaning by this, that it is in Him alone that God, who is otherwise invisible, is manifested to us. . . . I am well aware in what manner the Fathers were accustomed to explain this; for having to maintain a contest against the Arians, they insist upon the equality of the Son with the Father, and His identity of essence, while in the meantime they make no mention of what is the chief point—in what way the Father makes Himself known in Christ. . . . That therefore we may not receive anything but what is solid, let us take notice, that the term image is not made use of in reference to essence, but has a reference to us; for Christ is called the image of God for this reason—that he makes God in a manner visible to us. . . . The sum is this, that God in Himself, that is, in His naked majesty, is invisible, and that not to the eyes of the body merely, but also to men's understandings, and that He is revealed to us in Christ alone, that we may behold Him as in a mirror. For in Christ He shows us His righteousness, goodness, wisdom, power—in short, His entire self.[2]

All knowledge of God is indirect, through revelation. God is too far from us, too high above us, for us to arrive at the vision of Him. And since to see Him in His essence, in His "unveiled majesty", would destroy us, it is necessary that if He shew Himself to us, He shall do so under a form that shall be, so to speak, on our level, and shall neither harm us nor drive

[1] *Comm. on Matt.* 11.27. C.T.S. 2, pp. 41-2.
[2] *Comm. on Col.* 1.16. C.T.S. pp. 149-50.

us from Him in fear, but shall—as Calvin was fond of saying in his sermons—"gently allure us to Him". Thus the revelation or unveiling of God is always at the same time His self-veiling or concealing. The Incarnation of the Son of God was such a veiled revelation. In Him was revealed the fulness of the Godhead, but revealed under a form that concealed the revelation: "the glory of Christ's divinity . . . appeared under a veil of infirmity".[1] When He became man, His Godhead was in no way diminished. He remained that self-same Word who was eternally with God (*πρὸς τὸν θεόν*). "For the Son of God descended marvellously from heaven, so as yet He left not heaven, it was His will to be marvellously born in the virgin's womb, to be conversant in earth and hang upon the cross, yet that He always filled the world even as at the beginning."[2] Calvin has nothing to do with the *kenosis Christou*, and interprets "emptying" in Philippians 2.7 as the self-abasement or concealment of Christ: "This emptying is the same as the abasement, as to which we shall see afterwards. The expression, however, is used, for the sake of greater emphasis, to mean 'being brought to nothing'. Christ, indeed, could not divest Himself of Godhead; but He kept it concealed for a time, that it might not be seen, under the weakness of the flesh. Hence He laid aside His glory in the sight of men, not by lessening it, but by concealing it."[3]

There are two ways in which, following Calvin, we may relate the two parts of this paradox of revelation-concealment. The one is to see in the very abasement the revelation of God. This we shall consider later. The other is to think of the revelation in Christ as His occasionally making Himself known, or stepping forth from behind the concealing veil. This He does in two ways: by His words and His works.

Although Jesus was in Himself the Son of God, He did not so reveal Himself until His baptism, "but remained in concealment, during thirty years, as a private individual, because the time for His manifestation was not yet come; but when He intended to make Himself known to the world, He began with His baptism".[4] When, however, He had been baptised, He began to reveal Himself as the Son of God by preaching and

[1] *Comm. on Matt.* 12.17. C.T.S. 2, p. 58
[2] *Inst.* 2.13.4. [3] *Comm. on Phil.* 2.7. C.T.S. pp. 56 f.
[4] *Comm. on John* 1.32. C.T.S. 1, p. 68.

by miracles: "God had been made known to the world both by the teaching of Christ and by His miracles."[1] Jesus is the teacher, part of His three-fold office is that of Prophet; but we must be careful how we regard this, and what place we give to it in His life. He was not only the Teacher; He was also the Priest and the King. And His preaching was different from all other preaching in that, whereas other preachers must point their hearers away from themselves to Christ, He draws men's attention from all others to Himself. He does not even point men to God away from Himself—to a God that He could tell them about, or even bring them into a right relationship with —but He points men to Himself as the Divine representative of the Godhead.

> He proves from the effect that we ought not to seek God anywhere else than in Himself: for He maintains that His teaching, being heavenly and truly divine, is a proof and bright mirror of the presence of God. If it be objected that all the Prophets ought to be accounted sons of God, because they speak divinely from the inspiration of the Spirit, and because God was the author of their doctrine, the answer is easy. We ought to consider what their doctrine contains; for the Prophets send their disciples to another Person, but Christ attaches them to Himself.[2]

Moreover, the *doctrina Christi* was not a bare lesson, but contained such power as to convince men of its truth. In His teaching was the power of the Holy Ghost and the authority of God Himself, so that it miraculously declared Him to be the Son of God.

The miracles of Jesus, working together with His teaching, are also proofs of His identity, revelations of His Deity: "He was not known as the Son of God by the external form of His body, but because He gave illustrious proofs of His divine power, so that in Him shone forth the majesty of the Father, as in a living and distinct image."[3] This was true of all the miracles in general: "We know that Christ did not perform miracles for the sake of amusement, but had a distinct object in view, which was to prove that He was the Son of God, and the appointed Redeemer of the world."[4] And Calvin usually points to the fact when commenting upon particular miracles. Thus, on the

[1] *Comm. on John* 17.4. C.T.S. 2, p. 168
[2] *Comm. on John* 14.10. C.T.S. 2, pp. 87 f.
[3] *Comm. on 1 John* 1.1. C.T.S. p. 159.
[4] *Comm. on Matt.* 12.16. C.T.S. 2, p. 57.

raising of Lazarus: "Christ gave a remarkable proof of His divine power in raising Lazarus."[1] Or when he calls the first miracle that He wrought, in Cana of Galilee, "the first proof of his divinity".[2] The same difficulty arises with the miracles, however, as with Christ's teaching. They were not unambiguous proofs of His divinity, for others also had worked miracles. But, says Calvin, although it is commonly objected that He did not perform more miracles or greater miracles than Moses and the Prophets, "the answer is well-known, that Christ is more eminent in miracles in this respect, that He was not merely a minister, like the rest, but was strictly the author of them; for He employed His own name, His own authority and His own power, in performing miracles."[3] What, however, of miracles performed by false prophets and evil spirits? How do we know whether Christ cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince of the devils, or by the finger of God? Only, replies Calvin, by faith. "To whatever extent Satan may, like an ape, counterfeit the works of God in the dark, yet when eyes are opened and the light of spiritual wisdom shines, miracles are a sufficiently powerful attestation of the presence of God."[4]

The principal miracle was the Resurrection. By it Jesus shows clearly that He is the Lord over death. He comes from above into the world of humanity, even into humanity's death, and rises again by His divine power out from that death into His eternal glory. During His life in the flesh His divinity, though present, was hidden. His preaching was an exhortation to believe in spite of general appearances, and His miracles were so many flashes of lightning in the darkness. His Resurrection, however, was the clear shining forth of His divine glory.

The mean and despicable condition of Christ which they saw before their eyes, while, clothed with flesh, He was not at all different from other men, prevented them from submitting to His divine power. But now, by drawing back the veil, as it were, He calls them to behold His heavenly glory, as if He had said, "Because I converse among men without honour, I am despised by you, and you recognise in Me nothing that is Divine; but before long God will adorn Me with splendid power, and withdrawing Me from the contemptible state of mortal life, will raise Me above the heavens".

[1] *Comm. on John* 11.1. C.T.S. 1, p. 424.
[2] *Comm. on John* 2.11. C.T.S. 1, p. 89.
[3] *Comm. on John* 15.24. C.T.S. 2, pp. 128 f.
[4] *Comm. on John* 3.2. C.T.S. 1, p. 107.

For in the resurrection of Christ, so great was the power displayed by the Holy Spirit, that it plainly showed Him to be the Son of God.[1]

We must now repeat that the work of Christ did not lie simply in showing the Father to men able, and perhaps even willing, to behold Him. Christ was the Redeemer. His work was the reconciling of God and men. We cannot consider the revelation of God in Christ apart from, or, indeed, as different from, the reconciliation of God in Christ. It is true that Calvin speaks of Jesus revealing the Father in His teaching: "God was made known to the world by the teaching of Christ."[2] But this is to be understood as teaching about God's attitude towards us; as revealing the grace and mercy of God; as a preaching of the Gospel of forgiveness through Himself. His teaching was a part of His redemptive activity.

Jesus is the revelation of the grace of God. Frequently in the Commentaries on the Gospels Calvin speaks of Christ "exhibiting the grace of God". "The treasures of the grace of God would be exhibited to the world in Christ."[3] "True, indeed, the fountain of life, righteousness, virtue and wisdom is in God, but to us it is a hidden and inaccessible fountain. But an abundance of those things is exhibited to us in Christ, that we may be permitted to have recourse to Him."[4] Here again, however, this *exhibitio gratiae Dei* must not be construed to mean a simple showing forth of God's goodwill to men. The substance and the manner of the exhibition are one, in that it is a redemptive exhibition, an exhibition of the *grace* of God; and that means, of the forgiveness of God in the Incarnate, crucified and risen Christ. The exhibition is effected by teaching the grace of God, by showing with miracles actually and typically that God is gracious, and—by His incarnation, life, death and resurrection. In other words, *exhibitio gratiae Dei* means that Jesus Himself in, and not in spite of, His humiliation is the revelation of God and His grace. This is the principal idea of the Christological section of the *Institutio*, Book 2. For this reason Calvin begins the book by an uncompromising insistence upon the impotence and blindness of all men in relation to spiritual things. And when he comes to discuss *Cur Deus*

[1] *Comm. on John* 6.62. C.T.S. 1, pp. 272 f.
[2] *Comm. on John* 17.4. C.T.S. 2, p. 168.
[3] *Comm. on Matt.* 11.4. C.T.S. 2, p. 9.
[4] *Comm. on John* 1.16. C.T.S. 1, p. 50.

homo? in Chapter 12, he places the necessity in man's sin and God's mercy. The office of the Mediator was redemptive. "To what end Christ was promised from the beginning, it is well enough known: even to restore the world fallen into ruin, and to succour men being lost."[1]

In the statement that Jesus reveals the grace of God by His humiliation, there are expressed the two cardinal ideas of Calvin's doctrine of the Incarnation: the work of Christ is the work of God; and Christ's work is voluntary.

Athanasius poses, in his clear-eyed way, the dilemma with which, as it were, God was confronted when man sinned:

> It would, of course, have been unthinkable that God should go back upon His word and that man, having transgressed, should not die; but it was equally monstrous that beings which once had shared the nature of the Word should perish and turn back again into non-existence through corruption. . . . As, then, the creatures whom He had created reasonable, like the Word, were in fact perishing, and such noble works were on the road to ruin, what then was God, being Good, to do?[2]

The same question underlies the first four sections of *Institutio* 2.16, though there it is asked how God could both love us and hate us until "He was reconciled to us in Christ". The consequence of the Fall was not only subjective, but primarily man was placed in a new relationship with God. Whereas before, God had been the Creator-Father, blessing man with all good things, He now became also the Avenger, cursing man and his world on account of sin. "What then was God, being Good, to do?"

> For God who is the highest righteousness, cannot love wickedness which He seeth in us all. Therefore we all have in us that which deserves God's hatred. Therefore in respect of our corrupted nature, and then of evil life added unto it, truly we all are subject to God's displeasure, guilty in His sight, and born to damnation of hell. But because the Lord will not lose that which is His in us, He findeth yet somewhat that he of his goodness may love. For howsoever we be sinners by our own fault, yet we may remain His creatures. Howsoever we have purchased death to ourselves, yet He made us unto life. So is He moved by mere and free loving of us to receive us into favour. But since there is a perpetual and unappeasable disagreement between righteousness and iniquity, so long as we remain sinners, He cannot receive us wholly. Therefore, that taking away all matter of disagreement, He might wholly reconcile us unto Himself, He

[1] *Inst.* 2.12.4.
[2] *De Incarnatione* ch .6. (Eng. Trans. by A Religious of C.S.M.V.S.Th. 1944.)

doth by expiation set forth in the death of Christ, take away whatsoever evil is in us, that we who before were unclean and impure, may now appear righteous and holy in His sight.[1]

Since God's love is stronger than His anger, He does not destroy the sinner, but has mercy upon him. Yet He does not carelessly overlook sin, but makes satisfaction for it in the death of His Son. It is easy to sneer at this crude conception of an angry God and compare it unfavourably with a more refined philosophical theory of God. The weight of sin is not considered. At the Cradle and at the Cross of Christ we stand in the presence of something happening in God, something happening to sin, and something happening to ourselves. "For God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." Calvin cannot, therefore, interpret the life and acts of Christ as other than the acts of God. The "hour" of the Cross was "not an hour which is determined by the fancy of men, but an hour which God had appointed."[2] For

We ought always to remember that the wicked executioners of Christ did nothing but what had been determined by the hand and purpose of God; for God did not surrender His Son to their lawless passions, but determined that according to His own will and good pleasure He should be offered as a sacrifice. And if there were the best reasons for the purpose of God in all those things which He determined that His Son should suffer, we ought to consider, on the one hand, the dreadful weight of His wrath against us, and, on the other hand, His infinite goodness towards us.[3]

But Christ was not a passive instrument of God's purpose. In that there would have been no redemptive value. Our redemption comes from His obedience to the will of His Father. "Now, in answer to the inquiry, how Christ, by the abolition of our sins, has destroyed the enmity between God and us, and procured a righteousness to render Him favourable and propitious towards us, it may be replied in general, that He accomplished it for us by the whole course of His obedience."[4] Karl Barth has criticised *Le Catéchisme de Genève* for its minimising of the life-story of Jesus:

In his Catechism of 1545 Calvin at this passage of the symbol makes the teacher put the following question to the scholar: "Why do you pass immediately from His birth to His death, and skip the rest of His life-story?" ... But the answer also, which, according to Calvin's Catechism, the scholar

[1] *Inst.* 2.16.3. [2] *Comm. on John* 17.1. C.T.S. 2, p. 164.
[3] *Comm. on John* 19.18. C.T.S. 2, p. 226 [4] *Inst.* 2.16.5.

has to give to this question, cannot be described as satisfactory. It runs: " Here (i.e. in the Creed) there is mentioned only what belongs to the real substance of our Redemption . . .". Calvin's living pupils, namely, the authors of the Heidelberg Catechism, saw in this case not only more deeply, but above all more correctly from a Biblical-exegetical point of view than their Master when at the corresponding place (Q. 37) in answer to the question, " What do you understand by the Word *suffered*? " they said, " That *all the time He lived on earth, but especially at the end of His life*, He bore, in body and soul, the wrath of God against the sin of the whole human race . . .".[1]

The criticism is just—of the Catechism. But the Catechism does not in this point fully reveal Calvin's mind—as Dr Barth ought to have mentioned. Calvin also regarded the whole course of the life of Jesus as redemptive. Thus, in the *Institutio* he says, following on the passage quoted above:

> Which is proved by the testimonies of Paul: As by one man's offence many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience we are made righteous. And in another place he extendeth the cause of the pardon that delivereth us from the curse of the law, to the whole life of Christ saying: when the fulness of time was come, God sent His Son made of a woman, subject to the law, to redeem them that were under the law: and so affirmed that in His very baptism was fulfilled one part of righteousness, that He obediently did the commandment of His Father. Finally, from the time that He took upon Him the person of a servant, He began to pay the ransom to redeem us.

He then goes on to amplify what the Catechism says:

> But the scripture to set out the manner of our salvation more certainly, doth ascribe this as peculiar and properly belonging to the death of Christ. . . . Therefore in the sum of belief, which they call the Apostles' Creed, it is very orderly passed immediately from the birth of Christ to His death and resurrection, wherein consisteth the sum of perfect salvation. And yet is not the rest of His obedience excluded, which He performed in His life?[2]

Calvin thus regards the death of Christ as the intensive focal point of His life, and hence places the emphasis upon it, but comprehending and not excluding the whole of His life.

The obedience of Christ is the meaning of His humiliation and suffering. And as the suffering of Christ is the *exhibitio gratiae Dei*, so also is the obedience of Christ. Whereas revelation in Jesus Christ by miracle and word was first thought of as identifying Him as the eternal Word of God, and was concealed by His humiliation, now that humiliation itself must be

[1] *Credo* (Eng. Trans. 1936), p. 73. [2] *Inst.* 2.16.5.

regarded as the revelation not merely of God's *kindness* towards us (e.g. to what lengths would He not go for us?) but of His mercy: "by that humiliation He exhibits the infinite goodness of God".[1] The suffering of Christ means, then, that God did not leave us to perish in our sins, but saves us in Christ. It means at the same time that Christ has been freely obedient to the will of God, and so has reconciled us to God. In Him God has judged and forgiven us.

The revelation of the Father is not the revelation of a fatherly character called God, but the revelation of mercy, forgiveness and adoption by which we are brought from enmity towards God to be the dear children of a gracious and almighty Father.

> We cannot, from a contemplation of the world, conclude that He is our Father, when our conscience disturbs us within, and convinces us that our sins afford a just reason why God should abandon us and no longer regard us as His children. . . . Wherefore, though the preaching of the Cross is not agreeable to human reason, we ought nevertheless to embrace it with all humility, if we desire to return to God our Creator, from whom we have been alienated, and to have Him re-assume the character of our Father.[2]

We have already said that revelation is the work of the whole Godhead, and that the Spirit works in conjunction with the Word. This is so of the revelation in Jesus Christ. Just as we cannot come to or know the Father apart from the Son, so we cannot know the Son but by the Spirit. We can no more come "uninvited" to Christ than we can penetrate the ineffable light in which dwells the Father. "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him." "What?" cries Calvin, having quoted this verse, "is not He himself the lively image of the Father in whom the whole brightness of His glory is expressed unto us? . . . What? Came He not into the earth for this purpose, to declare his Father's will unto men? And did He not faithfully perform His office? Yes, surely. But yet nothing is wrought by His preaching, unless the inward schoolmaster, the Holy Ghost, set open the way to our minds."[3]

The two main ideas that we found in discussing the revelation in Jesus Christ meet in the work of the Holy Spirit. He opens our eyes to pierce through the humiliation of Christ and see His eternal glory. Who is this Jesus? What is the signifi-

[1] *Comm. on John* 14.9. C.T.S. 2, p. 87. [2] *Inst.* 2.6.1. [3] *Inst.* 2.2.20.

cance of His teaching and miracles? We do not know, and we are powerless to discover. But the Holy Spirit reveals Christ to us, and teaches us to say with Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God". "It is the gift of the Father that the Son is known, for by His Holy Spirit He opens the eyes of our mind to discern the glory of Christ, who otherwise would have been hidden from us."[1] This means that the Holy Spirit gives us faith in Christ, and not only faith that He is God, but faith that He is *Deus pro nobis*. Believing who He is, we believe why He came, what He does, and His efficacy for ourselves. Now this faith is a union between Christ and ourselves; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us. And by "this mystic intercourse which we have with Christ"[2] He and His blessings are given to us: "So long as Christ is out of us, and we are separated from Him, whatsoever He suffered or did for the salvation of mankind, is unprofitable and nothing availeth for us. Therefore, that He may impart to us those things which He hath received of his Father, it behoveth that He become ours, and dwell in us . . . the Holy Spirit is the bond wherewith Christ effectually bindeth us unto Him."[3]

There is no need here to do more than mention that we who cannot see Jesus Christ in the flesh, behold Him in the gospel, and that the revelation of God in Christ means for us revelation given by the illumination of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures and in preaching, the exposition of the Scriptures. "There were many unbelievers who beheld Christ at that time with the eyes of flesh, and yet were not more blessed on that account; but we, who have never beheld Christ with our eyes, enjoy that blessedness of which Christ speaks with commendation. Hence it follows, that He calls those eyes blessed which spiritually behold in Him what is heavenly and divine; for we now behold Christ in the gospel in the same manner as if He visibly stood before us."[4] This, however, the final link, as it were, in revelation, also teaches us the chief lesson that emerges from an examination of Calvin's doctrine of revelation, that revelation in any form is always revelation by the Word of God.

[1] *Comm. on Matt.* 2.27. C.T.S. 2, p. 42.
[2] *Comm. on Eph.* 5.29. C.T.S. p. 323.
[3] *Inst.* 3.1.1.
[4] *Comm. on John* 20.29. C.T.S. 2, p. 279

GOD'S ETERNAL DECREES

by The Rev. Professor J. G. RIDDELL

In the first two numbers of the *Scottish Journal of Theology* the Rev. J. K. S. Reid contributed an interesting and enlightening treatment of *The Office of Christ in Predestination*. Taking as his main theme the classic doctrine of Predestination, he showed the "deplorable consequences", particularly in the Calvinist tradition, that have followed a failure to realise the part played by Christ in Predestination. The limitation of Christ's function to the carrying out of "something already fixed and definitive", or the idea of His giving effect to "a decree in whose formation He has apparently had no hand", are shown to do dangerous injustice to His true office, in the suggestion that the divine decrees are somehow prior to the divine grace.

The present article attempts to discuss the same theme with the narrower interest of our Scottish subordinate standard of faith, the *Westminster Confession*, and its doctrine of the eternal decrees primarily in view.

It may be worth while to note at the outset the difference between the *Scots Confession* of 1560 and the *Westminster Confession* in regard to this doctrine. In the *Scots Confession* Articles I and II—of God and of the Creation of Man—are followed by the articles which deal with original sin and the revelation of the promise. In the *Westminster Confession* there is inserted between Chapter II—on God and of the Holy Trinity—and Chapter IV—on Creation—the section entitled God's Eternal Decrees, which has no direct counterpart in the earlier document. To a greater extent than has been commonly recognised this section determines much of what follows—and determines it with consequences no less deplorable in their theological implications than those of the Calvinist treatment of predestination to which Mr Reid refers.

Before examining these consequences it may be well to inquire on what grounds the Westminster Divines came to include a chapter, difficult in itself, and giving rise to endless difficulties.

Several reasons can be adduced, and each of them may have contributed to the form which the Confessional statement has taken.

In the first place, we can discern a desire to define the purpose of God as clearly as possible before attempting to describe its fulfilment. Before creation is expounded the purpose which it is to serve should be made plain. On grounds of logical propriety this must have seemed a perfectly reasonable proceeding which justified thus early in the Confession, the statement of the eternal decrees. Professor G. D. Henderson has pointed out that the *Scots Confession* "is neither so carefully complete nor so rigidly systematic as the *Westminster Confession*. It was produced by men who were worried, not so much by the niceties of theological controversy, as by practical problems of the Christian life, worship, government, and discipline" (*Scots Confession* 1560, p. 18). It may not be surprising, therefore, that the logical priority of the divine decrees over the other topics with which they had to deal was less apparent to them than to the Westminster Divines. To quote Professor Henderson in a later passage, "Westminster delved more laboriously into the problems of Election and Predestination, . . . the limitation of the extent of God's purpose in the Atonement, and the condition of Reprobation." The *Westminster Confession*, true to this description, assumed that the life of man has a prominent place in the divine purpose, and insisted that his destiny, like everything within the Universe, is controlled by the absolute sovereignty of God, who freely and unchangeably ordains all that comes to pass. The fate of humanity—and of every man—must be decided, therefore, at no lower level than that of the eternal decrees. The purpose of God for man reaches back before the foundation of the world. Nothing on the human side can entitle man to the destiny that God has thus prepared for him. Whether man be a sinner or not, only the immutable counsel of God can contrive blessedness for His creatures. The divine purpose can only be fulfilled in accordance with an eternal decree which is the sole ground of its fulfilment, nor can the sovereign will of God fail to accomplish what he has thus eternally decreed.

At this point a second consideration must be taken into account—the empirical fact of sin. If it be true that no human virtue could win for man his true destiny, it is equally true that

no human failure can deprive him of it, if it be eternally decreed by God. None the less it is plain that obedience to the will of God is not, in fact, rendered by all men nor even by a majority of mankind. The failure of the human creature to live in true dependence upon his Creator and to acknowledge his due responsibility is plainly written in the pages of history. The failure of many to whom the Gospel comes to receive it with the joy of which the Saviour speaks emphasises still more plainly the rebellion of man against his Maker. Blessedness cannot be the portion of such rebels—unless on some extreme theory of Universalism which is not here suggested—since its essential conditions remain unfulfilled. Logically there can be only one reason for this. If the purpose of God is formed from all eternity it must be within that purpose that some are destined for blessedness and some excluded from that destiny. Not the stubborn will of man but the eternal decrees of God, and nothing less authoritative, account for the empirical facts of human life as they must be recognised. "When you see that one is assisted so as to be baptised", wrote St. Augustine, "and another is not, so that he dies in his very bondage to sin, you must refer the matter to the hidden determination of God." The *Westminster Confession* puts it even more bluntly—some "are predestinated unto everlasting life and others are foreordained to everlasting death", and both before the foundation of the world was laid (Chap. III.3).

On the assumption of divine sovereignty, absolute and complete, and facing the reality of human nature as we know it, the logic of the argument is hard to overthrow. It claimed the intellectual assent of the Westminster Assembly. It retained the approval of the Church—apart from a few questioning voices—for two centuries and more. Before the foundation of the world, which was the first step in the fulfilment of His purpose, God had defined that purpose in detail and determined its achievement. The Chapter on Eternal Decrees had to come before the Chapter on Creation. Long before the Chapters on the Office of Christ and His mediation the issue is decided. "Others, not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the Word, cannot be saved" (Chap. X.4). The Office of Christ in predestination (Eph. 1.4) could not be more effectively set aside. No wonder that the Westminster divines, re-

membering perhaps, Calvin's phrase *decretum quidem horribile*, should go on to say that " the doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care so as to afford matter of praise, reverence and admiration of God" (Chap. III.8).

It will be apparent from what has been said that the third interest which the Chapter seeks to conserve is subordinate to the other two. The Confession claims, here as elsewhere, to be true to the teaching of Scripture. It is doubtful, however, if the Bible would have yielded the conclusions of the Confession had it been allowed to speak for itself, and not used as a source of proof texts for an already accepted argument.

The main doctrinal emphasis is, of course, Pauline, and particular stress is laid on Rom. 9.22 f.: "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction" in contrast with "vessels of mercy prepared unto glory". Dr C. H. Dodd, commenting on these verses, approves Dr Moffatt's translation "objects of anger" and "objects of mercy". He observes, however, that "the verses are extremely difficult in the Greek", and that "when Paul, normally a clear thinker, becomes obscure, it usually means that he is embarrassed by the position he has taken up" (*Moffatt Commentary*, loc. cit.). The passage implies a recognition of the empirical fact which the *Westminster Confession* emphasises—that certain men have become fitted for destruction. There is, however, no indication that their condition is due to the eternal decrees of God, any more than there would be ground for holding that a phrase like ἀδόκιμον νοῦν in Rom. 1.28, or ἀδόκιμοι in 2 Cor. 13.5 means more than that the reprobate have brought on themselves a loss of judgment which is the nemesis of disobedience to the moral principles of the Universe. St. Paul's main contention is positive, rather than negative. "The objects of God's mercy are to be found in the Christian Church; Paul and his readers are among them"—a conclusion which is not so much a theme to be handled with special prudence and care as a truth which, in Dr J. S. Stewart's phrase, "bows a man to the ground in amazed, adoring gratitude".

Finally it should be noted that the *Westminster Confession* has a concern which is not logical or empirical or Scriptural in the narrow sense, but rather doctrinal. It derives from the Reformation declaration of divine grace as alone the source of sal-

vation. Whether the doctrine of *sola gratia* can be adequately set forth apart from the Office of Christ, as is here attempted, and, particularly, whether it involves a parallel assertion of reprobation is a theological issue to which I shall return in the concluding portion of this discussion. Meanwhile it may be well to take into account some of the criticisms and protests which this part of the *Westminster Confession* has elicited.

On the theological side Scottish Churches have defined their attitude to the *Westminster Confession* as a subordinate standard in various Declaratory Acts and Articles by which the original form of subscription to the whole Confession of Faith has been modified. In the *Articles Declaratory of the Constitution of the Church of Scotland in Matters Spiritual* it is laid down that "the Church has the inherent right . . . to declare the sense in which it understands its Confession of Faith, to modify the forms of expression therein . . . always in agreement with the Word of God and the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith contained in the said Confession . . . and with due regard to liberty of opinion in points which do not enter into the substance of the Faith" (Article V). The Declaratory Acts of 1879 and 1892, in the United Presbyterian and Free Churches respectively, recognised, with the Church of Scotland Act on the Formula of 1910, as leading documents setting forth the constitution, standards, rules and methods of the united Church (*Basis of Union*, Oct. 1929 i), both dealt explicitly with the doctrine of the divine decrees.

The Act of 1879 states that this doctrine is "held in connexion and harmony with the truth that God is not willing that any should perish, . . . and that He has provided a salvation sufficient for all, adapted to all and offered to all in the Gospel." The Act of 1892, in a similar sense, declares that "this Church does not teach, and does not regard the Confession as teaching, the fore-ordination of men to death, irrespective of their own sin". In the execution in time of the divine purpose of grace the Church "most earnestly proclaims as standing in the forefront of the revelation of Grace, the love of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit . . . manifested especially in the Father's gift of the Son to be the Saviour of the world. . . . " The logical propriety of the Westminster Divines is plainly set aside in such Declarations, and an endeavour made to affirm in some fashion at

least the Office of Christ in predestination. Only such a repudiation of the traditional doctrine could make possible the further assertion of the wide range of God's redemptive purpose and the potential response of all men to His saving acts in Jesus Christ, and the equally important denial of the notion that man is "utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil" (*C.F.*, Chap. VI.4).

The Declaratory Acts did not serve a merely theological purpose. They gave formal expression to a growing conviction within the Church in Scotland that the traditional statements of the *Westminster Confession* did not do justice to the full meaning of Christian experience. McLeod Campbell's well-known preference for the *Scots Confession* (cf. G. D. Henderson, op. cit. p. 24) indicated dissatisfaction with the Westminster document. The Church deposed McLeod Campbell from his office for lack of conformity to its subordinate standard. It could not, however, conceal the fact that men and women whose faith depended on Christ's revelation of the Father would not remain content with statements which excluded Him from His central place, and substituted for the message of the Gospel a doctrine of divine decrees formulated by the *arcana consilia* of a God whose purpose was no longer measured in terms of His Son. "The God and Father of Jesus Christ is a God of Grace. Who, then, is this God who determines men's election before grace becomes operative?" (J. K. S. Reid, op. cit.).

Christian experience, as distinct from theological argument, seems to confirm what has just been said. Certain Scottish Churches—the Free Presbyterian and the Free Church of Scotland—still demand subscription to the whole Confession of Faith. Difficult as this may be theologically, it has raised no less acute practical difficulties. One has the impression that within the narrow circle of a localised faith the doctrine of predestination is not hard to accept. But when men and women trained in this tradition find themselves in a larger world, in time of war or through other circumstances, they become aware of a new tension between the rigid system of their upbringing and the wider implications of Christian teaching. In face of life as they now know it they cannot accept the denial of human responsibility which goes with emphasis on divine predestination. At the same time they find it impossible to believe that

an enormous number of their fellow-men should be given no opportunity of responding to divine grace. The teaching of Christianity seems to run counter to traditional doctrine. The contradiction which William Law discerned has become real in compelling fashion. " 'Oh the sweetness of God's election!' cries out the ravished preacher. 'Oh the sweetness of God's reprobation!' might the hellish Satan well say, could he believe that God had made him a free gift of such myriads and myriads of men . . . and reserved so small a number to himself" (*Works*, IX, p. 135). The contradiction, indeed, is so acute that it may be resolved only by a *reductio ad absurdum*, as in the Highland elder's prayer, "Lord, fill up the number of the elect, and then, Lord, in Thy goodness add some more!"

These considerations lead up to the next stage in the argument. They suggest, on the one hand, that the authors of the Declaratory Acts did not fully recognise what a central and far-reaching place the article on the Divine Decrees takes in the *Westminster Confession*. On the other hand, perhaps because of this, they did not do justice to the truth of Christ's office in election which the traditional statement had concealed.

It has been pointed out that in the Declaratory Acts modifications of the idea of total depravity and of the limited range of the redemptive acts of God follow the repudiation of the doctrine of Divine Decrees. It should be recognised, however, that references to these decrees appear almost constantly throughout the whole Confession. One might almost say, with Browning, "Mark the predestination!" on every page. Important theological problems are decided, and even at times evaded, by recourse to the free and immutable counsel of God's own will. In *Creation* is manifest the glory of His eternal power. In His *Providence* He not only withholdeth grace from the wicked and ungodly but exposeth them to such objects as their corruption makes occasion for sin, so that they harden themselves even under the means which He useth for the softening of others. From all eternity God gave Christ the Mediator a people to be by Him redeemed. *Effectual calling* is for all those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, including elect infants and other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the word. *Justification sanctification* and the *perseverance of the saints* depend upon the immut-

able decrees. The *Church* invisible consists of the whole number of the elect. In *Baptism* grace is exhibited and conferred to such as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will. The eschatological teaching is equally bound up with the doctrine of predestination, the salvation of the elect and the damnation of the reprobate. The whole Confession is logically built up on the premises of the third chapter. The divine decrees, ordained before the first day of creation, are fulfilled in the consummation at the last day and are effective to all eternity.

In setting aside the strict interpretation of the third chapter of the *Westminster Confession* the authors of the Declaratory Acts had, inevitably, to be content with a brief statement of their claim for liberty of opinion. They do not appear to make sufficiently plain the fundamental error of the original statement, which is precisely the point stressed by Mr Reid in the wider context of his articles—the exclusion of Christ's office from the concept of predestination. The purpose of God, for the Christian, cannot be defined by any *a priori* assertion of divine decrees, apart from a recognition of the events which are his only clue to that purpose. We must begin, not in terms of strict logic, with the *arcana consilia*, but with Biblical teaching interpreted in the light of Christian experience. The purpose of a *deus absconditus* may be theoretically defined. The action of the God who has called us with an holy calling in Christ is known and recognised. The fatal separation between the God who wills—in eternal decrees, and the God who acts—in redemptive purpose—has its counterpart in the traditional tension between the justice of God and His mercy.

The whole situation becomes formal and rigid. What Christ does for men is but the necessary sequel to what has been eternally decreed. The drama of redemption is the playing-out of a theme the interest of which is already gone—a mechanical operation by which the elect and the reprobate are manoeuvred to their proper locations. The purpose revealed in the actions of God in Christ, indeed, seems to bear little resemblance to the eternal decrees attributed to Him in the three interests noted above—the demands of a strictly logical argument, of the empirical fact of human wrong-doing and the somewhat reluctant evidence of certain Scripture passages.

The fourth interest of the *Westminster Confession*—the theo-

logical emphasis on *sola gratia* is based not on *a priori* argument but on the evidence of Christ's redemptive acts. His office, in effectual calling rather than in traditional predestination, may here be given a worthier place.

There is no escape, in the Bible, from the assertion of a divine calling. The election of Israel as God's people, narrowing to the choice of a remnant within Israel, is the Old Testament prelude to the coming of the elect One, from whose action the Christian Church is called into being as the company of the elect, continually enlarging its range. The New Testament is full of this theme, and its vocabulary—κλητός, κλῆσις, ἐκλεκτός, ἐκκλησία, ἐκλέγεσθαι—gives this emphasis quite clearly. The Bible does not speak of the calling of all men without differentiation everywhere and at all times, which, especially in an age which lays emphasis on political and social equality or on religious syncretism, is a popular substitute for predestination. Always the divine calling operates within a definite, limited range—the life of Israel, the Incarnation of our Lord, the witness of the missionary Church. Predestination may be involved, but it is not the predestination of eternal decrees and immutable counsels but of a God who makes known His purpose in His mighty acts to meet the needs of His children and most of all the need of sinners for salvation.

The *Scots Confession* was wiser here than the *Westminster*. Article VIII, of Election, begins indeed with election in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world was laid, but goes on unhesitatingly to link this purpose of God with the Incarnation, and insists that for sinners the Son of God took himself a body of our body, flesh of our flesh and bone of our bones. "For this cause, are we not afraid to call God our Father, not so much because He has created us . . . as for that He has given to us His only Son."

The doctrine of effectual calling can thus be closely allied to that of the office of Christ. It is acceptable just because it is derived not from the *arcana consilia* of God, but from knowledge of His redemptive acts. It expresses action determined by God's unchanging nature, but action taken in face of the actual situation of human sinfulness. The ultimate end may be the fashioning of new heavens and a new earth, but it is being wrought out in this present evil world. The empirical facts

recognised by the Westminster divines are not denied or ignored. They are indeed emphasised, and seen to be of greater gravity when they are met, not by a recourse to an immutable decree excluding multitudes from divine grace, but by the costly act of Incarnation. "The God of the Bible", writes Emil Brunner in *Revelation and Reason*, "is the living Lord God whose revelation comes through events, not through logical propositions." We must speak of effectual calling in the present tense. God is calling through the ministry of the word—calling to-day. This is the source of an earnest evangelism and true missionary endeavour which the traditional doctrine cannot inspire. As J. P. Struthers put it in his plan for an illustrated *Shorter Catechism*, "One could hardly illustrate effectual calling by human figures, but we could have a Church bell ringing, or a herald blowing a trumpet, or doves flying to their windows" (*Life and Letters*, p. 216).

The concluding portion of Mr J. K. S. Reid's article is specially relevant here, and in particular his impressive treatment, following Karl Barth, of the office of Christ in reprobation. Once the office of Christ is given its proper place, "God's will becomes alive and manifests in grace a certain direction, or, as we may say, preference. He wills 'not that any man should perish'. . . . Predestination is then God's gracious election. . . . He has provided Christ to fulfil and so annul our reprobation; and to win from us the response to our election which He eternally determined" (loc. cit.). If we thus link our belief not with the immutable counsels but with the office of Christ we shall be able also to present more adequately the other articles of belief to which reference has been made. Creation can be described as the fashioning of a universe within which sovereign grace may be operative, and the providential and redemptive acts of God have true place. The Christian life from Baptism onwards can be interpreted in terms of response to the divine call, and eschatological problems, however difficult they remain, are set free from what Mr Reid described as the dangerous parallel between election and reprobation as being each eternally lodged in the predestinating purpose of God. Most of all, the doctrine of the Church can be interpreted in the light of a truth too much neglected in the *Westminster Confession* and indeed in our Scottish tradition—that

the call of God both for this world and the world to come is to the community as well as to the individual.

Two quotations may illustrate the point. "The idea of election—of having been chosen out and pre-ordained by God *unto salvation*—is an immediate and pure experience of the actual religious experience of grace", wrote Rudolf Otto (*Idea of the Holy*, E.T., p. 91). "The recipient . . . sees love that delivered in action, seeking and selecting, and acknowledges that an eternal, gracious purpose is watching over his life." "The idea of the salvation of the individual soul", declared Nicolas Berdyaev, in *Freedom and the Spirit* (E.T., p. 355), "as well as the idea of the predestination of a small number to salvation, is a species of metaphysical individualism. . . . The idea of the collective character of the ways of salvation is opposed to this sort of individualism. In the Church we are saved with our brethren, all together. We hope for a universal salvation; that is to say, for the transfiguration of the whole cosmos."

Here again, the argument meets eschatological issues. The problems indicated in the closing section of Mr Reid's treatment reappear—the necessary affirmation that it will always be open to men to reject what is offered in Christ and the grave difficulty of finding room for the reality of their persistent rejection. It may be true, as Mr Reid suggests, that this is not the sudden reef which exposes the weakness of a theory and on which it must suffer shipwreck, but rather a portion of that reef of evil with which all theories must reckon, and which none can in final analysis really negotiate. If so, we are at least more likely to avoid disastrous shipwreck if we abandon the doctrine of the divine decrees in its traditional form, and seek to give to the work of Christ, to the action of God in history, its true and Biblical place. "I would have preferred", writes Karl Barth in the Preface to the second volume of his *Dogmatics*, "to remain close to Calvin in the matter of predestination, but it was and is impossible." It is impossible, he suggests, because Calvin and his successors have not considered the doctrine from an exclusively Christocentric point of view. So regarded, the doctrine of election, both of the individual and the community, is seen to be the sum of the Gospel. It can be recognised as the best thing that can ever be said or heard—that God chooses

man and freely loves him. It has its basis only in our knowledge of Jesus Christ, in Whom God elects man to participate in His own glory, takes upon Himself man's reprobation and determines him, as a member of the Church, to become himself a carrier of its witness to the whole world. "The more I let the Bible speak to me", says Barth (loc. cit.), "concerning these things, and the more I reflected about the things which I heard according to my belief, the more this new conception grew irresistibly upon me."

LUTHER'S DOCTRINE OF VOCATION

by The Rev. Professor PHILIP S. WATSON

"Vocation" is a word of varied significance, both secular and religious. Religiously, it can mean God's calling of men into His kingdom through the proclamation of the Gospel, or His calling of particular persons to particular spheres of service such as the Ministry. Secularly, it can mean any trade, profession, or employment that a man may follow, including such occupations as the Ministry. The Latin original of the word, *vocatio*, and its German equivalent, *Beruf*, are used in all these senses by Luther, but with important differences. In the first place, the distinction between religious and secular is entirely foreign to his thinking. When he speaks of *weltlicher Beruf*, or "worldly vocation", he never thinks of it as either irreligious or non-religious, but as a Divine appointment for our life in this world. In the second place, his conception of vocation includes a great deal more than ours normally does. In one of his sermons he raises the question, what it means to have a vocation. He answers it by saying: You are in a *Stand*, a "station", you are a married man or woman, a son or daughter, a man-servant or maid-servant; and he goes on to point out what duties such "stations" impose upon us, so that if we had four heads and ten hands we should still have quite enough to do. Other lists of "stations"—or "offices", as he also calls them—include: the prince, the magistrate, the teacher, the scholar, the father, mother, children, master, servant, and many more. A man's vocation, therefore, is given in and with his station and its duties, which embrace not only his trade, profession, or employment, but the whole range of relationships in which we human beings can stand to one another in this world.

The idea of vocation itself is not, of course, an original conception of Luther's; but the development of it in his doctrine of *weltlicher Beruf*, or worldly calling, undoubtedly is, and it is a mutilated and secularised version of this doctrine that we have in our modern use of the word. Luther finds the starting point

for his doctrine in 1 Corinthians 7.10: "Let each man abide in that calling wherein he was called." It might perhaps be questioned whether he does not find more in his text than it really contains, but with his exegesis we are not here concerned. What interests us is his doctrine of vocation, which in any case rests on a much broader basis than any single text of Scripture. In order to understand this basis, we shall begin with a consideration of what Luther regards as the first essential for a sound theology, namely, the distinction between the Law and the Gospel. To be able to make this distinction rightly, he tells us in his *Commentary on Galatians*, is the mark of "a right divine".

Law and Gospel are the two distinguishable but inseparable parts of the Word of God, and the Word is the expression of the divine will. In the Law, the will of God is expressed in the form of a demand made upon us, supported by sanctions temporal or eternal. It stands over against us, threatening penalties if we do not fulfil its requirements. The Law is known to us in three distinct ways: as the "natural", the "traditional" (or Mosaic), and the "evangelical" Law. All men, according to Luther, have a natural knowledge of the Law; for all men know, even though their knowledge is grievously obscured and perverted by sin, that there is a God whom they ought to worship, and that in their relations with their fellowmen they ought to do as they would be done by. This knowledge of "the natural law" is given them by God, divinely implanted in their hearts. The law of Moses, or the two tables of the Decalogue, is nothing else but a succinct exposition of this natural law, teaching us more specifically our duty to God and our neighbour; and the "evangelical" law is the further interpretation of this in the teaching and example of Christ, which reveal to us the true inwardness of the Law.

What the Law requires, as interpreted by Christ, is ultimately and essentially nothing else but love—such love as is found in Christ; the love that seeketh not its own, but its neighbour's good; free, unselfish, self-sacrificing love for others. But such love is not found in fallen, sinful men. Otherwise, we should not be sinful; our will would be in harmony with the divine, and the will of God would not stand over against us as Law at all. The Law, however, cannot produce in us such love

as it demands, for love is not produced to order, By virtue of the sanctions attached to it, the Law can appeal to our selfishness and self-interest and persuade us to behave more or less as it requires; it can compel us to "do the works of the Law", as Luther puts it, lest a worse thing befall us. And that is what it is intended to do. That is what Luther calls the "first use" of the Law, its "political" or "civil" use, in which its function is "to bridle the flesh", "to restrain sin", "to punish transgressions". In this way it secures to us a vast number of blessings in this mortal life, which would be lost to us if unbridled selfishness were to have its way.

But the Law has also a "second use", which Luther describes as "spiritual" and says its purpose is "to reveal sin". This it does when it is applied, not simply to our behaviour, but to our hearts, according to the interpretation of it given by Christ. So applied, it convicts us of pharisaic pride, if we imagine that by doing the works of the Law we are fulfilling its deepest demands; it condemns the subtle motives of self-interest and self-concern that taint our best and finest achievements; it brings us under the judgment and the wrath of God. In this way, the Law is intended to prepare us for the Gospel, to be the severe schoolmaster that brings us to Christ, by driving us to despair of ourselves. But it must not be allowed to drive us to despair of God, or else we are lost; and therefore it must never be separated from the Gospel. When it is divorced from the Gospel—or wrongly related to it—the Law becomes a destroying "tyrant", as Luther calls it, an evil thing, and no longer the holy, righteous and good Law of God.

In his *Commentary on Romans*, Luther expresses the relation between the Law and the Gospel as follows. The Word of God to us in the Law says: Thou hast need of Christ; while the Word of the Gospel says: Here is Christ. He is thinking, of course, of the Law in its second, or spiritual, use and of the Gospel in what he calls its "proper office". For the Gospel has two "offices", of which the first is to interpret the Law and effect the spiritual use of it that we have described. This is its "strange" (*alienum*) office, in which it comes to us as *Cacangelium* rather than *Evangelium*, bad news rather than good, because it convicts us of sin and bids us repent. But in its proper office the Gospel speaks with another voice and stands

in sharpest contrast to the Law. The Law gives commandments, the Gospel promises; the Law makes a demand, the Gospel an offer; the Law condemns sin, the Gospel forgives it; the Law proclaims wrath, the Gospel grace; the Law requires works, the Gospel seeks only the response of faith. When the Gospel says: Here is Christ, it presents Him to us not as the interpreter of the Law and our Judge, but as the Friend and Saviour of sinners, in whom God displays towards us the very love His Law requires, but does not find in us. Here, in Christ, incarnate, crucified, risen and reigning for us, God's will of love has found its fullest and deepest expression, God has spoken His final and most revealing Word.

This Word, spoken in Christ, is the Gospel, and by it everyone who believes it is delivered from the tyranny of the Law. For to believe it, to accept it by faith (which is the only way we can accept it), is to let our sins be forgiven and have their condemnation by the Law annulled; it is to consent to God's will and way of love, so that we no longer oppose, but yield, our will to His; it is to be no longer under the Law, but under Grace. And just thereby, Luther declares, we begin to do what the Law demanded, but demanded in vain. Faith always issues in love, which proceeds from it, as Luther says a thousand times, like good fruit from a good tree. Love is the criterion, he maintains, by which we can tell whether a profession of faith is true or false. How faith thus produces love, he never really tries to explain, for it is the mystery of God's working in the heart and life of the believer; but he asserts again and again that wherever there is true faith, there is God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, living and active in and through the believer, who thus becomes, according to the measure of his faith, a "new man", a "good tree", a channel and instrument of the divine love itself.

By now it should be reasonably clear what is the distinction —and the connexion—between the Law and the Gospel. But before we can show its relevance to the doctrine of vocation, a further and vitally important feature of Luther's understanding of the Word of God must be observed. The Word, we have said, is an expression of the will of God; but that does not mean that it is a merely theoretical statement about God's will, or an abstract doctrine concerning it. On the contrary, wherever

it is found, both as Law and as Gospel, the Word is an actual, concrete manifestation of His will by the living God Himself. How this is so, it is not difficult to see if we consider Luther's understanding of the way God works in His world.

Like St. Paul in Romans 1 and 2, Luther finds God revealed through "the things that are made". "In all creatures", he says, "there shines the face of God, because they are works of God and testimonies of the divine will and presence." The Creator, moreover, is "unrestingly active in all His creatures"; and these creatures can be described as "masks" or "veils" of God, media through which He directly confronts men and has dealings with them in the midst of the concrete circumstances of their daily lives. That is how it is that all men have "by nature" at least some measure of awareness of God and His will, however much this awareness may be obscured and distorted by sin. And that is why the exposition of the Law in the Decalogue and its interpretation by Christ have meaning for us, since these simply tell us how and to what end we should fulfil that "natural law" which our conscience is already aware that we ought to obey. For God's will in the form of Law already meets us and presses upon us in the ever-present and manifold demands of those stations and offices of which we have heard Luther speak, and which we may now notice that he describes as "ordinances" and "creatures" of God (*Ordnungen* and *creaturae*—the two words are synonymous). In a similar way, the Gospel also is a quite concrete reality as Luther sees it. It is presented to us in the Scriptures, in Christian preaching and teaching, in the Sacraments, and in the fellowship of the Church. But what is presented to us here is something quite other than a mere doctrine or set of beliefs about God, for in and through these creaturely "ordinances" God Himself comes to us, is present with us, speaks to us, deals with us, acts upon us for our salvation; and to accept them in faith as the very works and words of God, addressed quite personally to oneself, is to receive salvation. God is thus present and active in the created order, and the two main forms of His activity are the Law and the Gospel, which are embodied in what Luther calls respectively *politia* and *ecclesia*, or *weltliches* and *geistliches Regiment*, "worldly" and "spiritual government".

If we now turn to consider in more detail Luther's doctrine

of vocation, we find that, corresponding to the two forms of divine activity in the world, there are two vocations. Through the Gospel in the Church God calls men into His kingdom of grace, into the *christlicher Stand*. Here all men are equal. High and low, rich and poor, laity and clergy, wise and foolish, all appear before God simply as sinners to receive, each for himself by faith, the forgiveness of sins, life and blessedness, as God's free gift of love. Through the Law, on the other hand, embodied in the manifold stations and offices of our earthly life, God calls us, not to receive, but to give and serve, not simply to believe, but to do. And here all men are not equal. There are diverse ranks and degrees and estates—but all of them meant for service to others, as we shall see. Now it is here, in the context of the Law, that Luther's specific contribution to the idea of vocation is made. It is here that he develops his own peculiar use of the word *Beruf*, with which we are particularly concerned. But before we go on to elaborate it, there is one point that should perhaps be underlined. The distinction between worldly and spiritual government does not mean the division of life into two separate spheres, nor of mankind into two separate classes, of which the one would be governed by the Law, the other by the Gospel. Luther's distinctions are differently drawn, and they have to do with the different relationships in which any man may stand, on the one hand to God, and on the other to his neighbours. The relationship to God is of course the all-determining factor, and it affects not simply a department of life, but the whole.

Now our vocation is given us in and with our stations and offices, as Luther calls them, or the various relationships in which we stand to our fellowmen, our neighbours. He speaks commonly of three main stations or offices, two of them belonging to the worldly, and the third to the spiritual government, which together cover the whole range of life. The former are, first, *Hausstand* (*Hausregiment*, *oeconomia*), which includes all that is involved in the relations of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants; and secondly, *Regieramt* (*Obrigkeit*, *politia*), which includes all that is involved in the relations of rulers and subjects, magistrates and citizens and so on. In the spiritual government, or *ecclesia*, there is only the *Priesterstand* (or *das Priester Amt*), that is,

the Ministry in its various forms, with all it involves for those appointed to it and those they minister to. Now it is clear that any one person will find himself in more than one of these stations, bearing the responsibility of many offices; but no matter how manifold his resultant duties may be, they are all included in his *vocation*. They are all concrete and living embodiments of the Law of God and its demand for love and the works of love, and they can actually be described as "commandments" (*Befehl*) of God. "God has given thee thy office that thou mayest serve", Luther says, and he maintains that "all stations are so made that they tend to service". Service is our vocation.

It is true that men do not love and serve others simply because they are told to do so, and fallen, sinful men would rather be served than serve; but by means of His Law embedded so to speak, in the very structure of human life, God ensures that they either put a check to their self-will and selfishness or suffer for giving free reign to it. For in the nature of the case, they cannot completely ignore their duties to their neighbours without courting disaster, not only for others, but also for themselves. The bad workman loses his job, the dishonest tradesman his custom; the criminal is punished by the magistrate; the evil ruler invites insurrection and rebellion; all unrestrained self-seeking brings its revenge in one form or another. For their own sakes, therefore, men are well advised to attend to their vocations, if they will not do so for the sake of their neighbours. Here we have the Law in its civil or political use, to which we have already referred, whereby a great deal of evil is prevented and a great deal of good secured in human life.

When men rightly attend to the responsibilities and duties of their vocation, Luther says, they are co-operators with God. Through them God gives effect to His purposes of love in the world and continues or extends His creative activity. The meaning of this may be illustrated as follows. God creates the soil and the seed without any man's help; but then He enlists the co-operation of men in the vocation of farming, and through them ploughs and sows and reaps to furnish the means by which (through the co-operation of the miller and baker in their vocations) He provides bread to supply the needs of men.

Similarly, God creates the sheep and makes wool grow on its back; but the shearing, carding, combing and so forth He carries out through men who co-operate with Him in their various vocations and so produces clothes to supply the needs of men. Again, the prince and the magistrate co-operate with God, when they make and administer laws that are necessary to the well-being of the community, and also when they repeal or suspend such laws whenever their application would be injurious to those concerned. For, as Luther never ceases to assert, government is intended for the benefit of the governed, not of the governors, and no station or office is more truly a vocation to service than that of a ruler. But all vocations, of course, are for service; and all who properly attend to them are in their measure co-operators with God, agents of His ceaselessly creative activity—and that, be it noted, whether they are Christians or not. There is no "closed shop" principle in God's employment.

But properly to attend to one's vocation is not a simple matter, and there are two features of it in particular that raise problems. The first is the multiplicity of every man's vocation. We all occupy a number of different stations and offices, stand in a large variety of different relations to our many neighbours, and all of these make different claims upon us, sometimes hard to reconcile with one another. That is why Luther says that if we had four heads and ten hands we should still have plenty to do. The second feature is what we may perhaps term the mutability of our vocations. By this is meant, not simply that while some of our relationships, such as that of parent and child, are fixed for us by birth, others are open to choice, such as that of employer and employed; but it means even more that we are constantly, daily, finding fresh and ever-changing claims made upon us in all our relationships by the very fact that "life never stands still". In consequence of these things, it is impossible to attend rightly to our vocation by setting up a fixed rule of behaviour, an unvarying code of conduct. Every new situation that arises for us demands fresh treatment, new decisions, and the adjustment of our actions to its needs.

If we ask Luther on what principles we are to base our decisions, how we are to know the right thing to do, he will reply: You must ask what love requires, or what reason

dictates. By that he means that we must consider the situation, not in the light of our own wishes and desires and preconceived ideas, but "objectively", as we should say, to see what really needs to be done and what can be done for the best. It is interesting to observe how he sets "reason" and "love" side by side, quite sure that the reasonable thing to do is just what love would want done. He refuses to give us precise and detailed directions for the conduct of life, because he knows that the observance of rules and regulations can all too easily conflict with any real consideration for our neighbours. All laws are unjust to somebody if they are quite rigidly applied, as we all know; and unbending devotion to principle often conceals more of concern for one's own virtue than it reveals of care for one's neighbours. Hence Luther insists that reason must be allowed to teach us moderation (*epieikia*, *Billigkeit*) in these matters, or asserts that love is the queen and mistress of all laws and has power to set them aside whenever they contradict her. Indeed, he roundly declares that whatever does not contain, explicitly or implicitly, the demand for neighbourly love, cannot be regarded as a law at all.

Luther knows, of course, that particular laws and rules and regulations have their place, but they must never have the last word, must never be regarded as immutable and absolute. They are to be made and unmade, observed and disregarded, according to the needs of the circumstances and in order to serve the truest welfare of men. Even the Law of God is not, for Luther, a fixed code of commandments; it is not found written as such in the Bible or anywhere else. It is the living expression of God's will of love, meeting us day by day in the never-ceasing and ever-varying claims of our manifold neighbourly relationships and making demands on the service of our bodies and brains, whether we have love for our neighbours in our hearts or not.

Through the Law, we have said, God is at work in the world; but now it must be observed that, in Luther's view, the devil is also at work, seeking to destroy the work of God. The devil, as Luther understands him, is the very quintessence of lovelessness and selfishness, the universally present and powerful spirit of self-will and self-seeking that tyrannises over and corrupts human life. He is of importance for us here be-

cause he makes it one of his chief concerns to prevent men from observing God's Law and rightly fulfilling the vocations given to them by God. In Luther's view, all misuse, contempt, or neglect of those stations and offices that are the good creatures or ordinances of God, is traceable in the last resort to the devil's work. We have not space here, nor is there need, to investigate in detail the manifold and often subtle ways of the devil's working, but there are one or two points in connexion with it that we may notice. The first is, that Luther makes a distinction between genuine and false offices and vocations. He holds, for instance, that the monastic life is not a true vocation, inasmuch as the monk blasphemously regards the married state as secular, although it is an ordinance of God, and renounces it in favour of his allegedly religious vocation in order, not to serve his neighbours the better, but to gain merit and save his own soul—and incidentally escapes thereby all the troubles and trials connected with marriage and family life. Luther does not maintain, of course, that no man has any right to remain unmarried. He is no legalist, and he would have nothing to say against the celibate whose motive was neither the selfish desire to ensure his own salvation nor to secure for himself a life of greater ease, but the better to render service to others in whatever station he might occupy. No station in life, as Luther sees it, can be regarded as divinely ordained and a true vocation, unless it involves real service to others, and it is interesting to note that he condemns the usurer on ultimately the same grounds as the monk, since the disservice done to men by the taking of usury far outweighs the service rendered by a loan.

Another and even more serious manifestation of diabolical influence Luther finds in the failure to maintain the right distinction and connexion between Law and the Gospel, a failure which results in the practical confusion of the worldly and spiritual governments. The Gospel pertains to "heaven" and things eternal, the Law to "earth" and things temporal; the Gospel is meant to rule our conscience, our heart, our personal relationship to God, while the Law is to rule our "flesh" and our outward conduct in our relations with one another. But men continually turn this order upside down. Either they will have our relation to God determined by the Law, making our

obedience to it the way to salvation, and subordinating the Gospel to it as (at best) the means to its fulfilment; or else, having learnt that our salvation is given by the Gospel, they wish to abolish the Law altogether, denying it a place even in our earthly, temporal life. The first of these errors Luther found in the medieval Church, particularly in its doctrine of salvation by merit, its exaltation of specifically religious "good works" over the secular life, and its attempt to unite in the one office of the Papacy both temporal and spiritual authority. The second error was committed by the antinomian extremists of the Reformation, who wished to reject civil and political authority as ungodly, preached utopian ideas of equality, and held it was wrong for Christians ever to use force. Whereas "the Pope" had established a spiritual tyranny by putting Law in heaven, as Luther would say, the "*Schwärmer*" threatened to produce temporal anarchy by putting the Gospel on earth.

In Luther's own view, of course, there is a sense in which all men are equal. *Coram deo*, in relation to God, they are all quite simply sinners in need of the grace offered to them in the Gospel. Here their stations, offices, vocations make no difference, for God deals with them as persons, not as particular instances of whatever class of society they may belong to. Here everyone, whether pope or prince, parent or child, master or servant, is simply an *Einzelperson*, an individual or private person, with no rights or advantages or authority over anyone else. But *coram mundo*, or *coram hominibus*, before the world and men, no one can be regarded simply as a private person, for everyone has a definite place in society, in relation to others. Here, therefore, the stations, offices, and vocations of the Law have their place, and everyone is a *Weltperson* and *Amtsperson*, a public person and office-bearer, invested with the privileges and responsibilities of his station. These he must accept and fulfil as his vocation, as commanded by God, neither neglecting the responsibilities nor using the privileges for his own ends; and then it is clear that there is a proper place for the exercise of authority and even for the use of force. But when, as often happens, a man occupies more than one station or office, he must avoid confusing the duties and privileges attaching to them. There is no fundamental reason why one person should

not hold the offices of both pope and prince, or of preacher and of magistrate; but the duties imposed on him by the former, in which he is a minister of the Gospel, are very different from those of the latter, in which he is a servant of the Law; and he must neither seek to assert his papal authority by means of princely edicts, nor yet to replace the administration of justice by sermons on the forgiveness of sins. Both worldly and spiritual government have their place, and both concern all persons; but to confuse them is the devil's work, and the evil consequences it has in the life of human society are, in Luther's view, a plain manifestation of God's wrath.

But now it may be asked whether Luther, despite his rejection of the distinction between the religious and the secular, has not introduced an equally dangerous dualism in his sharp distinction between worldly and spiritual government? Does he not seem to suggest that there is no connexion between religion and politics, faith and works, the inward and the outward life? Is he not virtually saying that the Law has no relevance for our relationship to God, nor the Gospel for our relationships with our neighbours? In order to answer these questions, we may briefly and in conclusion consider Luther's understanding of the Christian life.

The Christian life, as Luther conceives it, is founded on baptism, which confers on all without distinction the *christlicher Stand*, Christian status. With St. Paul he holds that by our baptism we are "engrafted" into Christ, incorporated into His Body as members of it. This means that we are baptised into participation in Christ's death and resurrection. Baptism, therefore, is not merely a ceremony of initiation, but a reality that covers the whole life of the Christian. The rite itself signifies the mortification of Adam, the old man, the sinful flesh, and the resurrection of the new man, the spiritual man, in Christ. But this death and resurrection is not accomplished in a moment, and the whole life of the Christian believer consists of a daily dying and rising again, by which he is "conformed" to the image of Christ, the crucified and risen Redeemer. Our full and final conformity to Christ, however, is not realised in this present world, but only through actual death and the resurrection of the dead. Putting it another way, Luther says that baptism "regenerates", and that out of baptism there

comes a new man; but he does not mean by this that any change takes place in the psychological or metaphysical "substance" of human nature. The baptismal regeneration is a sacramental anticipation of that eschatological regeneration "when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory". And the connexion of baptism with justification is similarly eschatological; for baptism, Luther says, "signifies death and resurrection, that is, full and complete justification".

To the consummation the Christian looks forward with confident faith and hope, though he knows only too well that he has as yet by no means "put off the old man". He knows that as long as he is in this life, he is both old man and new, both "flesh" and "spirit", both righteous and a sinner, for although he is able by the grace of God, or by the power of Christ and the Holy Spirit in his heart, to live without "wickedness", yet he is certainly not "sinless". The corruption of his sinful nature (the "flesh"), however, "is healed from day to day through grace by the crucifixion of the flesh with its lusts"; and this crucifixion of the flesh is the work of the Law. In its first, or political, use the Law "bridles the flesh", as we have already said; it keeps sinful impulses in check and "restrains sin". In its spiritual use and applied to the conscience, it convinces us of our sinfulness and so is our tutor unto Christ. But the Law, we have also said, meets us and brings its pressure to bear upon us precisely in the concrete circumstances of our station and duties, our vocation. Our vocation, with all that it does to curb our self-will and self-seeking by compelling us to serve others, with all the burdens of toil and trouble it lays upon our bodies and minds, and with the problems and conflicts of conscience that it causes us—our vocation is the means that God employs for the crucifixion of the "old man"; it is the Law in action in its two-fold function.

But our vocation of itself can never create in us the new man; it can never make new creatures of us, so that we accept and fulfil all its demands upon us, not because we are obliged to, but because we desire to serve our neighbours out of sheer love for them. It can present us with works of love to be performed, and it can make us perform many of them out of simple self-interest and concern for our own affairs; but it cannot drive self-interest out of our hearts and replace it with

unselfish neighbourly love. Only the Gopsel can do that; only God in Christ can work that miracle, and He begins to do so the moment we begin to believe the Gospel. In that moment, we receive God's gift of love whereby we ourselves are enabled, according to the measure of our faith, to love and to fulfil with willingness and pleasure the tasks of our vocation. Or, as Luther characteristically puts it, we become like a vessel or tube that is open above by faith to receive all things from God, and open beneath by love to pass on God's gifts to our neighbours. Freely we have received and freely we give, and to the extent that we do so, we are indeed "new men".

But perfect channels and instruments of God's love we are not yet. The new creation is not yet completed so long as we are in the flesh. The remnants of the old man, with his self-will and self-interest, still cleave to us and must be mortified until the end. The final goal is reached only when "this mortal shall have put on immortality, and corruption incorruption, so that death is swallowed up in victory and full righteousness and perfect love".

UNIVERSALISM—A REPLY

by The Rev. J. A. T. ROBINSON

May I write a few words to thank Dr Torrance for his reply to my article on Universalism? I feel that his positive statement of the doctrine of election in the second half is an important step forward in the discussion. If one could be sure that everyone was agreed on that, the whole of the first half of my article would be unnecessary.

But I should like also, if I may, to take up his two main points of criticism, which he states succinctly in the words: "The first half of the argument is grounded on the law of non-contradiction, whereas the second half is made to repose upon a human analogy."

I would maintain, on the contrary, that the whole of my position is in fact *grounded* on that upon which he insists, namely, the *action* of God in Christ. For the Christian, the *eschaton has been* revealed, in the summing up of all things and all men in Jesus Christ. To assert "the end of the Lord" is not to pry or to argue presumptuously into the future. The Last Day will consist simply in the outward vindication of the fact already declared. The doctrine of universalism rests wholly on this final self-assertion of God in the action of Jesus Christ. It does not rest either on logic or on human analogy.

The sole use which I make of logic is to establish the fact, which he admits, that the traditional doctrine of a double decree is "inconsistent" with this election of all men in Christ and that it rests on a "false antithesis" of justice and love. Admit that, as I say, and any demonstration of it becomes superfluous. But in fact Dr Torrance goes on to imply that I try to establish my own view of universalism by logic: "Universalism means that the contradiction can be bridged by reason after all." This is not my view at all. I concur with everything he says about the surd-like nature of sin. The mystery of iniquity *is* an irrationality. But then I never claimed that sin is something that is overcome by the Divine rationality —that is Hegelianism—but by the act of God in Christ. To

say that God can be defeated because sin is irrational is to say that His love is only the power of reason, and that the surd is, or can be, ultimately the most powerful thing in the universe. I believe in universalism precisely because Christ is a *fait accompli* in history and not an argument.

As for my use of analogy, I *base* nothing on it at all. I could simply have stated, as the Biblical writers do, *both* the doctrine of the *apokatastasis and* the real possibility of hell, and left it at that. The only use I make of human analogy is not to establish this position, but to try and show that it is not in fact so utterly contradictory as it sounds. To logic, within the *I-It* relationship, the two alternatives are, as I admit *from beginning to end*, quite irreconcilable. Nevertheless, if we are to be true to the Bible, *and not simply to insist on the reality of the second*, we must, despite every absurdity, hold them *both*. It is Dr Torrance's position, in fact, which says, "I cannot think them both together, therefore one of them cannot be asserted." My analogies are only attempts to show that in our human experience we do in fact, *when we are in the I-Thou relationship*, quite happily hold together incompatibilities of a similar kind. But if the analogies do not help, scrap them: nothing rests on them.

Lastly, may I justify my use of Scripture? Dr Torrance says that I have cited passages from the N.T. which would seem to me to point in the direction of Universalism, while ignoring those many others which declare in no uncertain terms an ultimate division of humanity into two camps. I did hope that I had forestalled this criticism. I have not the slightest wish to ignore or soft-pedal anything that is said in the Gospels on the reality of hell. Indeed, I regard it as an utterly necessary part of the preaching, and I agree that "no doctrine that cuts the nerve of that urgency" can be anything but "an abiding menace to the Gospel and to mankind".

Let me put it like this. I think Althaus is right to insist that "the truth in the statement of double predestination does not lie in it as a theory of a double divine decree, but as an expression of the inner tension of the faith in justification" (*Die letzten Dinge*, 4te Aufl., 186-7). To the Christian *in via*, there are always the two possibilities open to him, of heaven and of hell. He remains in need of perennial reminder when

he thinks he stands to beware lest he fall. He can be justified only as "knowing the terror of the Lord" and the frightful possibility always open of an ultimate denial. Unless a man is confronted with this possibility as an existential reality, and unless he continues to be confronted with it till the last hour, he cannot be saved. Consequently, *from the point of view of the man facing decision*, there is no other Gospel to be preached: to proclaim only heaven as a reality is to deny a man the possibility of salvation. And it was from this point of view that all Christ's teaching about the two ways is given. *From the point of view of the* doctrine of God, the assertion comes that God's summing up of *all* men in Christ is, and must be, the ultimate fact and outcome of the universe. But if a man faced with the decision for Christ *rests* on that ultimate outcome, or lets it in any way influence him, so as to avoid the seriousness or the necessity of decision, then, in that state, and as long as he remains in that state, he cannot be saved. To the interesting speculation: "Lord, are they few that be saved?", the answer must always come: "Strive to enter in by the narrow door."

How these two realities can be held together without lessening the seriousness of either may be beyond our imagination, as it certainly is beyond our logic. If human analogies help, let them. If they do not, at least let us nevertheless hold both realities together, as the Bible does, *as realities*, and not the seriousness of decision as a reality and the *apokatastasis* as a possibility. Both are realities from their own point of view. Universalism is simply saying that the ultimate point of view about history is not man's but God's. Man's reality is taken up into God's without being destroyed.

THE ORDER OF PUBLIC WORSHIP IN THE REFORMED CHURCHES

by Professor WILHELM NIESEL[1]

(*Address delivered before the Alliance of Reformed Churches, Geneva, 14th August* 1948)

I

Comparison between the simple order of service of the Reformed Church and that of the Lutheran with its richer content has led to the opinion that Luther merely purged the Mass of some objectionable elements; the Reformers on the contrary totally reconstructed the divine service according to the principle of their knowledge of God. Research into the history of the liturgy has proved that such is not the case. The Strasbourg order of public worship which was brought by Calvin to Geneva and thence passed on to a wider circle of Churches shows clearly its derivation from the medieval Mass, as with the majority of Lutheran orders. The sermon is inserted between two parts of the service which have their origin in the Mass, and the concluding portion of the service is so shaped that Communion may at any time be included in it. The case is different with the orders of service that derive from Zwingli and Oecolampadius and were adapted by Farel and a Lasco. The pattern of the Mass is here completely abandoned; but one can clearly discern the old order of the medieval preaching service. We have, therefore, on Reformed ground two basic forms of divine service of totally different derivation—an astonishing fact when we think how the matter is usually understood.

Starting from here we may proceed right away to establish some important points.

(*a*) The form of divine service is obviously not of fundamental importance for the Reformed Churches. The service can be ordered in this way or in that. Ordered it is, and

[1] Translated by the Rev. John C. Campbell, B.D., Dunnottar.

arbitrariness of every kind is consciously avoided; but there is no uniform order of service, fixed for all time.

(*b*) There is therefore no principle according to which the Reformed service is to be shaped. The Glory of God or even simplicity and clarity have been regarded as the principles determining the Reformed order of service. That does not correspond to the facts. The order of Reformed worship is indeed, as is commonly said, tied to the Confession. That does not, however, mean that the order was shaped according to definite prescriptions from the Confessions.

(*c*) There is no service without sermon. The Strasbourg order makes provision for the omission of Communion from the service in certain circumstances, but not the sermon. The latter has not merely come in between the two parts of the Mass; on the contrary it is the kernel of the whole service. In this way also Zwingli and Oecolampadius were able to make the preaching service—peripheral in medieval times—the regular service of the congregation.

(*d*) With that a further important note has been struck. The congregation is complementary to the sermon. The Roman Mass can be said without the congregation. Reformed worship without a congregation is impossible. Not only is the congregation complementary to the service, but the service is for the edification of the congregation.

II

However certain it may be that the form of our worship points back to the Middle Ages, it is equally certain that it is no mere development from the medieval service. The Mass was not, for example, merely transformed on the basis of new theological insight. It was not simply abridged by the excision of a whole series of parts; nor were these parts simply displaced by others hitherto somewhat neglected. Rather the whole traditional Roman order of service was broken up in the sixteenth century and something else sprang to life in its place. The Mass was recognised as "accursed idolatry" (*Heidelberg Cat.*, *Q.* 80) and where it had hitherto been celebrated God's congregation assembled "to learn the Word of God, to use the holy Sacraments, to call publicly upon the Lord, and give Christian alms" (*Q.* 103). The Book, which in the medieval

service was still opened alongside of the Missal, proved itself all at once the Book of books. It secured a hearing "as if the very living voice of God was to be heard there" (Calvin *Inst.* 1.7.1). In His Word God Himself came on the scene and burst through the pious human words of the Roman Missal. God took the initiative and maintained it. He did not suffer His Word be laid aside again and again, as is the custom in the Mass. And where the Word of God made itself heard, there also was the congregation which it called.

This congregation knew itself to be the work of God. It understood that what mattered was not its own achievement, but only the act of God. It had not just received from God one eternal impulse, but recognised that at every moment He was its Creator and Lord. Instead of celebrating Mass and thus offering ever a fresh sacrifice to God, the main thing was to humble oneself in the presence of God and be content with His action.

The nature of the traditional service was therefore fundamentally perverted. It was not merely some parts of it that were corrupt; rather a false qualification nullified the whole from the start. Where works of human piety had spread themselves abroad, God wished to do His work with His congregation. For that reason there was no question of carrying out improvements on the Roman Mass. It had to break up in the presence of the majesty of God.

This appeared in the following way:

The role of the priest in worship was played out, because the sole High Priest between God and man had reasserted His authority. With the priest the altar disappeared from the congregational meeting-place, because the all sufficient sacrifice of Christ, offered once for all on the Cross, tolerated no other sacrificial action beside it. With the altar, candles and incense had to go and above all the sacred Host preserved on it after Mass, in which our forefathers could see nothing but an idolatrous misrepresentation of Christ the living Lord.

It was not by accident that pictures and statues of the saints came down from their places within church walls; for where the Saviour Himself re-established His gracious rule, no other men might call attention to themselves any longer; for in them no beatitude is to be sought or found. The worship

of saints and images in the Church of Rome, culminating in the adoration of the Virgin Mary, brought the nature of the traditional service to its clearest expression. When our forefathers set it completely aside, they were not thereby showing a mistaken legalism, but making it plain that in worship our sole concern is with the work of God upon His congregation.

Thus was completed the cleansing and setting up of religious ordinances according to the Bible. Thus public worship became "according to the Word of God", i.e. all that was contrary to the living Word of the living Christ, fell away, and there was awakened by His Spirit that which served the edification of the congregation.

III

The true content of Christian worship, which had been buried in the Roman Church, came thus to the light of day again in the Reformation and created a new form for itself. Although the form of our service may recall the medieval one, the content which it is intended to secure is different. That must be clearly emphasised particularly with respect to the Calvinist form of service with its recognisable derivation from the Mass. The same thing, however, is true for orders of service in so far as they go back to the medieval preaching service. The content of the medieval preaching service was wholly different from that of the Reformed order. To clarify our view let us add the following observation: The new content of Reformed worship is not a new insight or religious sentiment, but the crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ Himself; it is not a thought about Him, nor a religious feeling kindled by His figure, but He Himself, the living and present Lord. More accurately: The essential thing in worship is the action of this Lord; He appears on the scene and convokes His congregation. That is the oft quoted "objective element" in worship, if one must use this dubious concept.

Here we may appeal with gratitude to Martin Luther. He has given clear expression to this state of affairs. According to him the chief end of worship is "that our beloved Lord may speak with us through His holy Word and that we in turn may speak with Him through prayer and praise" (W.A., 49.588). Correspondingly Calvin said in the preface to the

Genevan *Order for Public Worship*: "Thus, to sum up, there are three particulars concerning which our Lord has given us commandment to adhere to them in our spiritual assemblies: to wit, the preaching of His Word, public and ceremonial prayers and the administration of His sacraments" (*C.R. Calv. Opp.* 6, 165). The reason why Calvin mentions three particulars is that, unlike Luther, he does not bring up in the first place the very Word of God, but the preaching of the divine Word. Now if one speaks of the proclamation of the Word, mention must also be made of the Sacraments as well. It is the will of the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, to confront us in proclamation through the mouth of His witnesses and through the elements of His Sacraments.

The response of those who are called out of the world, the *Ecclesia*, is complementary to the gracious call of the living Lord. Of course we are not to understand that to mean that in true worship the congregation must also appropriate the Word, as if the activity of the recipient were essential to imparting the element of objectivity. That is just what it does not mean. We said previously: "God takes the initiative and maintains it." In other words, the answering yea to the call addressed to us is not our work. Every time this answering yea is given, then it is the same living Lord active again, and this time in us through His Spirit. Only so can we cry, "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8.15, Gal. 4.6). The Lord Christ who summons His own people in worship, makes them answer His call and brings them to prayers. Prayer like the Word is the act of the exalted Christ.

For this reason these two main parts of worship are anything but fixed elements, which by this or that combination could bring to expression the correct form of our worship. We are not here dealing with stones with which to build up and shape our service, but—to apply a New Testament illustration used in another connexion—with living stones. Word and prayer are actions of the exalted Lord, which we can neither set going nor govern.

These deeds of Christ the Lord have as their aim the edifying and perfecting of His Body. It is not the will of Christ to be present here on earth just for His own sake. He bestows His presence in order to draw His own to Himself. Thus the

congregation is essential to worship; not as if the Lord needed us but because in His great mercy He wills to save us. Right worship is the gathering together of the congregation under the Word.

Worship is therefore quite different from a religious celebration ordered in accordance with its object. The form of a religious cult has a value of its own, whether this be used or not. In so far as a cult has found expression in set prayers or sculptured monuments we can at any time endeavour to estimate its value. But an order of divine service, on the other hand, without the living Word and without a congregation, yields nothing. Anyone who thinks he has in it the root of the matter is making an idol of it. The order has no value of its own, but only in so far as it serves to build up the Body of Christ. Since the matter there at issue is the gathering and perfecting of the congregation, the form of worship must be adjusted with this eschatological goal in view. That is to say, there is no classic order of service. A proposal has been made to work out a uniform order of service for all Reformed Churches. That may happen. But do not let us suppose that we would then have a form of worship adequate to its object for all times and every congregation. Like the exterior of a living body, the form of worship must adapt itself to such growth of the Body of Christ as comes to the Body itself from its Head. The form of worship may not resemble a temple of stone, but rather the tent which Israel served in its pilgrimage through the wilderness. "Quousque Domine?"—this sigh of Calvin's must be heard over our services.

IV

The congregation has the Lord's promise: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18.20). They may therefore hope for His presence whenever His name is proclaimed and called upon. The tie that binds the congregation to the origin of its life, the Word of God, frees it from all other ties. It is subject to no statutes, ordinances, or times. Christ has set us free from this yoke, which Rome has reimposed on Christians. It is His will that we should know ourselves to be placed under His gracious rule alone, and not under the constraint of powers

of any kind, even should they be pious ordinances which delude us into believing that we can be saved by keeping them.

It would be unheard of (says Calvin) seeing that there are some things in which the Lord has left us freedom in order to give us greater opportunity for edifying the Church, that we should seek to achieve a servile uniformity in such matters, without taking thought for the true edification of the Church. For when we shall one day appear before the judgment seat of God, to give account of our deeds, we shall not be questioned about ceremonies. Such a uniformity in outward matters will find absolutely no consideration, whilst the proper use of freedom certainly will. That usage will count as proper which has most contributed to the building up of the Church. (*Op. Sel.* 1.432; cf. also *Conf. Helv. Bost.* 27.)

About individual points in the order of service the following things have to be said:

Our orders of service are good because they give a central position to the preaching of the Word. Admittedly the mere giving of this precedence is not sufficient; for everything depends on the preaching being according to Scripture. Religious addresses do not have the promise of the presence of Christ. Our concern is rather to transmit the herald call of the Apostles and that thus the Lord Himself may speak to men to-day through us His messengers. It is to keep us clear of bypaths that Calvin has so strongly insisted that we should make diligent use of the " remedy" (so Calvin, *Inst.* 4.1.1) that the Lord Himself has put into our hands—the Holy Communion. For this reason the order of service which he took over from Strasbourg is so shaped that there is a noticeable gap in it, if the Communion is not celebrated. The regular celebration of the Lord's Supper every Sunday has nowhere established itself. The reason for that is to be sought not only in the resistance of the civil authority of those times. In that case the weekly celebration of Communion could surely have been introduced in the Huguenot congregations, which were independent of the civil powers. Rather Calvin was convinced that the congregations were not at that time spiritually ripe for a weekly celebration of Communion.[1]

[1] Iam vero singulis mensibus coenam celebrari maxime nobis placeret: modo ne usus frequentior negligentiam pariat. Nam dum maior pars a communione abstinet, quodammodo dissipatur ecclesia. Malimus tamen singulis mensibus invitari ecclesiam, quam quater duntaxat in singulos annos . . . (Calvin 12.8, 1561, C.R. Calv. Opp. 10a, 213). Things were settled in this way in the Palatinate Church Order.

The attempt of the Confessional Church to introduce the weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper must also be regarded as a failure. It is on the whole, perhaps, more appropriate to have Communion services at longer intervals so that a really substantial proportion of the congregation takes part in them. These services then—Zwingli has done the right thing here—should certainly not be shaped according to the pattern of the Mass, but according to genuine Biblical knowledge of the Lord's Supper. For the rest we may take comfort from the fact that Baptism is at least from time to time administered at Divine Service and thus attention is drawn to the fact that in the sermon our concern is not to present religious thoughts, but to bear witness to the Incarnate Word.

No special devotional part of the service is set aside apart from sermon, the Lord's Supper, and Baptism. That would assume that we were able to offer something of our own to God. In our services, therefore, prayers whether said or sung are strictly related to sermon and sacrament. In so far as they are not themselves proclamation of the Word they represent the response of the congregation to the heard word, in supplication, thanksgiving and intercession.

It is characteristic of our orders of service that they leave room for free prayer. Thereby set prayers undergo a necessary enlargement that preserves them from stiffness. In addition there is kept alive the awareness that true prayer is always a gift of the Holy Spirit. This knowledge, on the other hand, has as a matter of fact led to the use of certain set prayers—the Psalms. If anyone wants to give the people a greater share in the devotions let him turn to this much neglected treasure of the Reformed Churches instead of borrowing elsewhere. Psalmody is an essential mark of our services. They bear the strong impress of the sung Word of God. But those who tried to ban completely other hymns here and there, were on the wrong track. As the Word is expounded in the sermon, independent witness can also be borne to it in prayer and hymn.

Calvin here lays great stress on prayer being made in the common speech known to the people. No old-fashioned ritual language no longer understood by the congregation is to be permitted. We must be careful lest by a preference for old

formularies we contradict the intention of the men who composed these collections of prayers for their own times.

Finally it is essential that the various actions in the service should not be carried out by one office-bearer alone. We know no theory of a general priesthood, according to which one member of the congregation (the minister) is selected and acts for all the rest. We know rather from 1 Corinthians 12 that God confers on members a diversity of gifts of the Spirit for service in the congregation. That gives expression to the rule of Christ, the Head, over His Body, the congregation, with its many members. A claim is made on all members by and from the Head for the edification of the Body. Thus in our services besides the minister with his divinity training, the ordinary members with no theological training take an active part. They co-operate in reading the Scripture (e.g. the Ten Commandments), assist at the distribution of the Lord's Supper, collect and administer the thank-offering of the congregation, and discipline is in their hands. All members are active in the praise of God, in intercession and offering for those in need.

This gathering of the congregation under the Word must not become an end in itself. The congregation may not seal itself off from the world and delight itself in beautiful services. We Germans have with some justice been asked if we did not turn to active preoccupation with the liturgy just at the time when it became mortally dangerous to bear unabridged public testimony to God's Word. A church which withdraws into the sphere of purely ecclesiastical matters can be long endured by the world. Let us take care lest movements for the renewal of the liturgy bring us to the point of retreating voluntarily into the Ghetto! The gathering of the congregation for worship must be, according to the Word of our Lord, the light of the world. It is the source of strength for the service of all mankind.

A decisive point is that the whole service in its form and content should remain open to be called in question and renewed from time to time by and from the Word of God. All movements for the reform of the liturgy prove their value by showing whether they are really concerned about reformation through the Word for the edification of the congregation. Reforms which labour for enrichment of the service, or strive

after a greater participation of the congregation, or desire to attain to a certain catholicity in its form, are all of no avail. They can indeed turn us aside from the very thing with which we have to do. The Church and also its meeting for worship need one thing only, an oft repeated renewal through the Word and Spirit of God Himself.

BAPTISM IN THE CHURCH

by Rev. Professor T. W. MANSON

The new and sustained interest in the doctrine of the Church, which is one of the outstanding characteristics of theological study in our day, has lately taken a turn which seems to hold the promise of fresh and fruitful developments. There has been any amount of discussion in the past about the Church's faith as worked out in controversy and expressed in creeds and confessions; about the Church's organisation and the functions and status of her ministers; about the Church's code of conduct or ethical ideals. In these discussions it has not always been remembered that the Church is a worshipping community. True, there was a branch of study called liturgiology; but few students were attracted to it. To most people it seemed to be at best a harmless kind of antiquarianism remote from the main business of theology and the real life of the Church. Its exponents tended to be looked upon—often, it must be confessed, not without justification—as diligent pickers-up of unconsidered trifles. All that is changing. It is realised that the corporate worship of the Christian community in all its aspects is an essential and distinctive part of its life; and that it is one of the main tasks of Christian theology to know and interpret Christian worship. Much had been done to this end by the publication of liturgical texts; and much is being done to bring out the inner meaning, the faith, hope and love that find expression in the Christian rites, and the divine grace that is mediated through them.

This keen interest in the worship of the Church is not confined to any one branch of the Christian community or to any particular rite. Catholics and Protestants alike are concerned in the study; and the Genevan service-books receive as full and careful attention as the Eastern liturgies or the Roman Missal. It is natural that one of the main centres of interest should be the sacrament of baptism; and we have recently had a series of interesting and important publications on this subject. The present article is particularly concerned with

one of the best of them, Mr. Flemington's book on the place taken by baptism in the New Testament;[1] but any adequate account of the situation in the study of the subject must take notice of the work of Oppenheim,[2] Dix,[3] Cullmann,[4] Leenhardt,[5] and Barth.[6] It is evident that Mr Flemington's work makes its appearance in distinguished company; and it may be said at the outset that it can stand the inevitable comparisons.

There is one other thing to be said by way of introduction. It is increasingly clear that for the full understanding of most of the central things in the Christian religion we have to look first and foremost to the New Testament; but we have also to see the New Testament teaching in its setting, and that means taking account of what went before in the Old Testament and the belief and practice of Judaism, and of what came after in the belief and practice of the Church. The New Testament is normative; but it does not give its clearest guidance if it is studied in isolation. This is a specially relevant consideration when we are dealing with baptism.

Mr Flemington rightly insists on the significance of baptism as a rite of incorporation into the Christian community. It is at this point that continuity with what had gone before is established. For the Jewish baptism of proselytes[7] was a rite of incorporation into the Jewish community, i.e. into Israel, and John's baptism was a rite of incorporation into an Israel "prepared to meet her God". There is an initial presumption that Christian baptism should be regarded as the rite of incorporation into the new Israel.

[1] *The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism*, by W. F. Flemington (London, S.P.C.K., 1948. 10s. 6d.).

[2] *Institutiones Systematico-historicae in Sacram Liturgiam. Liturgia Specialis. Series II Liturgia Sacramentalis. Vol. I De Fontibus et Historia Ritus Baptismalis* (Rome, 1943).

[3] *The Theology of Confirmation in relation to Baptism* (1946).

[4] "Les Traces d'une vieille Formule bapti smale dans le Nouveau Testament", in *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses* (1937), No. 5-6, pp. 24-34.

"La Signification du Baptême dans le Nouveau Testament", in *Revue de Théologie et de Philosophie* No. 123, April-June 1942; *Les Premières Confessions de Foi Chrétiennes* (Paris, 1943); *Urchristentum und Gottesdienst* (Basel, 1944); *Die Tauflehre des Neuen Testaments* (Zürich, 1948). (Also in French: *Le Baptême des Enfants et la doctrine biblique du baptême*. Neuchâtel, 1948.) This last work is a reply to Barth.

[5] *Le Baptême chrétienne, son origine, sa signification* (Neuchâtel, 1946).

[6] *Die kirchliche Lehre von der Taufe* (Zürich 1943), English translation by E. A. Payne, *The Teaching of the Church regarding Baptism* (London, 1948).

[7] I take it as established beyond reasonable doubt that the practice of baptizing proselytes had been adopted before John's mission began, and that he adapted the rite to his own purposes.

This I take to be the fundamental idea. It is crossed at a very early date by another. In Acts 1.5 and 9.16 the Risen Lord is represented as teaching that John's water baptism was only the prelude to a new and better baptism with Holy Spirit. This Spirit baptism is believed in the early Church to have been foretold in Old Testament prophecy, to have been announced by John the Baptist, and to have been realised at Pentecost and thereafter. In this connexion it is important to note the use made of Joel's prophecy in Peter's speech at Pentecost. The prediction of Joel is not only the explanation of what has already happened to the Eleven; it is also the promise of what can happen to others besides.[1]

It is important to note the difference between these two conceptions of baptism. The first is the rite of admission into a society *after the candidate has fulfilled certain conditions*. In the case of the proselyte to Judaism it is unreserved acceptance of the Torah[2] that is required. John the Baptist called for repentance, confession of sins, and the intention to lead a better life. The conditions of Christian admission I defer for the moment. The second conception of baptism is not concerned with a rite but with a *charisma*, a spontaneous manifestation of divine grace and favour. *It is marked not by pre-conditions but by after-effects*, and in particular by the phenomenon of *glossolalia* in all its variations whether it be the happenings at Pentecost or the experiences of the household of Cornelius or simply the Gentile convert crying "Abba".[3]

In the New Testament we can discern a tension arising from the co-existence of those two conceptions of baptism. We can see the nature of the tension if we ask what are the conditions of admission to the Christian community. The case of Cornelius shows that the gift of the Spirit, evidenced by *glossolalia*, is a *sufficient* qualification. But is it a *necessary* one? Other cases in Acts suggest that it is not.[4] In these cases

[1] For a clear, though later, statement see *Const. Ap.* vii.41.7.

[2] See B. J. Bamberger, *Proselytism in the Talmudic Period*, 31-37.

[3] It is by the Spirit that this cry is made possible; cf. Rom. 7.9.14 f.; Gal. 4.6.

[4] Acts 2.38.—The order is repentance; baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins; reception of the Holy Spirit. 8.12.—Baptism follows on belief in Philip's preaching about the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ: later the Holy Spirit is received after prayer and imposition of hands by the Apostles (14-17). 8.35 ff.—The Ethiopian eunuch is baptized on his acceptance of Philip's preaching of Jesus: reception of the Spirit is not mentioned. 10.44-8.—Cornelius and his household receive the Spirit while Peter is preaching; they speak

reception of the Holy Spirit is not a pre-condition of baptism. *It is a highly desirable sequel*, and steps are taken to secure it; but there is no reason to think that the baptism would be deemed invalid if it did not happen. At the same time there are indications of a movement towards making the gift of the Spirit and the accompanying manifestations a condition of baptism. The situation depicted in 1 Corinthians 12-14 and the controversy there about spiritual gifts can be best understood as the result of an attempt—probably originating in Palestine to demand *glossolalia* before baptism.[1] The solution of the problem reached in the Pauline churches was that the essential *glossolalia*, which proved the gift of the Spirit, was reduced to one word, *Abba* (Rom. 8.15; Gal. 4.6). Along with this goes the confession of Jesus as Lord (1 Cor. 12.3); and so we come to the point where *glossolalia* and the baptismal confession of faith run into one another.

The tension between the two conceptions of baptism has left its mark on the liturgical practice of the Church. The practice of the majority of churches, especially in the West, is expressed in the order Baptism, Confirmation, Communion, of which an early example may be seen in the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus.[2] But the practice of the early Syriac-speaking Church, which may well represent an older tradition, is given in the order Confirmation, Baptism, Communion.[3] The order Baptism, Confirmation, Communion prevailed; and it may be that what turned the scales in its favour was the desire to conform the rite to the account of the baptism of Jesus. It is

with tongues and by Peter's orders are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. 16.14 f.—Lydia baptized with her household on believing Paul's preaching. 16.31 ff.—The Philippian jailer and his household baptized on their believing in the Lord Jesus, Paul having spoken "the word of God" to them. 18.8.—Crispus and others believe and are baptized. 19.1-7.—Twelve disciples already baptized with John's baptism are baptized a second time by Paul in the name of the Lord Jesus; Paul lays his hands on them and they receive the Holy Spirit, speak with tongues, and prophesy. 22.16.—We are told how Ananias exhorted Paul, at his conversion, to be baptized and wash away his sins, calling upon the name of the Lord.

[1] T. W. Manson, St. Paul in Ephesus: (3) The Corinthian Correspondence, in the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* xxvi (1941); Entry into Membership of the Early Church, in *J.T.S.* xlviii (1947), pp. 25-33.

[2] Ed. Dix, pp. 23-43. cf. his *Theology of Confirmation* 10 ff.; Oppenheim, op. cit. 71 ff. cf. Hippolytus *Comm. in Daniel* 1.16, 33, and Bardy's Introduction, p. 62.

[3] Later Antiochene practice as described, for example, by Theodore of Mopsuestia in his treatise on Baptism (ed. Mingana, *Woodbrooke Studies*, Vol. VI) looks rather like a fusion of the two earlier forms.

important that the tension is there in the earliest period of Church history, even in the New Testament itself. But still more important is the fact that in any case baptism is a rite of incorporation into the Church, the New Israel, the Body of Christ. It involves a change of status of the most drastic kind. This is well brought out by Mr Flemington (p. 77), who shows that the differentia of Christian baptism, in contrast to the lustrations of the mystery-cults, lies in three points: (*a*) its once-for-all character, (*b*) its being "into the name", and (*c*) its connexion with the gift of the Spirit. The second and third of these characteristics can be seen lying side by side in 1 Corinthians 6.11. All three find expression in the liturgical practice of the Church; and the drastic nature of the change of status is vividly shown in two pairs of contrasting acts in the ritual. The first pair is the exorcism of the evil spirits and the invocation of the Holy Spirit: here the candidate is passive. The second pair is the renunciation of Satan and all his works and the adherence to Christ; here the candidate is active. With this latter goes the fact that the earliest recorded Christian baptisms are into the name of Jesus, i.e. into His possession.[1]

Naturally in the earliest stages we are reading about a church in the Mission field and that means that the things deemed worth recording are the conversions of adults. There is little or nothing on the baptism of children except possibly as involved in the mass movement of a whole household from paganism to Christianity. And in those cases it is by no means clear what happened to the children. The relevant passages in the New Testament and the analogies of proselyte baptism might be interpreted to mean either that children were baptized along with their convert parents or alternatively that it was considered unnecessary to baptize them at all, then or later. The Jewish practice appears to have been to baptize those children of heathen converts who were already born when the parents came over to Judaism, but not those born after the admission of the parents.[2] It would not be altogether surprising

[1] See the excellent remarks of Flemington, p. 75, and F. C. Grant, *Anglican Theological Review*, xxvii (1945), 256 f.

[2] 1 Cor. 7.14 and Cullmann, *Tauflehre* 20, 38, 47; Strack-Billerbeck 1.110 ff.; Bamberger, op. cit. 41 f., 52-5. If a woman is converted to Judaism while pregnant, her son needs no baptism after he is born.

if in this, as in so many other matters, the Church of the first century had followed the general lines of Jewish practice.

But it is not very long before we find two dogmatic principles at work and pulling in opposite directions. The one is the belief that serious post-baptismal sin may be unpardonable;[1] and its effect is to make people defer baptism as long as possible. The safest time is when one is at the point of death. The other doctrine pulls in the opposite direction. The danger of dying in a state of original sin (especially where infant mortality rates were high) tended to make baptism something to be administered as soon as possible after birth.[2] In general it would seem that in strongly rigorist groups the natural tendency was to defer baptism. Mr Runciman has numerous examples in his book *The Medieval Manichee*, beginning with the Marcionites. And an interesting case is that of Novatian, a rigorist of the rigorists, who had clinical baptism, when he was thought to be dying.

Where baptism was deferred the motive might be ascetic or libertine. The purpose might be to go into strict training as a preparation for the decisive step. Or it might be merely to have one's fling. In the latter case the Church could hardly be expected to acquiesce in the view that baptism was just something to be asked for as the final demand in a life of self-indulgence.

Along with the two conflicting ideas of baptism, we find two views of the Church. One, strongest in the West, takes the Church as a *corps d'élite*. Standards are high, discipline is severe, and excommunication without very good hope of restoration is a permanent threat. The idea is not so much that of a "gathered Church" as of a "hand-picked" Church. The other, more at home in the East, takes the Church as an institution for training and educating its members. This in practice means finding a way to deal with their faults.[3] On

[1] Heb. 6.4-6. The problem is faced by Hermas in the second century: he opens the discussion, out of which the penitential system eventually comes.

[2] The relation between a belief in original sin and the practice of infant baptism is not easy to trace. The logical connexion is obvious enough: Augustine uses the practice of infant baptism to support the doctrine of original sin. The doctrine appears in Judaism (Loofs, *Dogmengeschichte*, 3rd Edn., 39 ff.). Tertullian has it (*de Anima*, 39-41, with Waszink's commentary, pp. 446 ff.) and Cyprian (Ep. 64.5). See also Loofs, *Symbolik* 137 f., 266 ff., K. Holl *Enthusiasmus u. Bussgewalt* 52 ff., 259.

[3] K. Holl, *Enthusiasmus und Bussgewalt*; Oppenheim, op. cit. 64.

the one side we have such men as Tertullian and Novatian; on the other Clement of Alexandria and Origen. (It is curious how rigorism tends to schism: those who begin by regarding others as not good enough for the Church not infrequently end by regarding the Church as not good enough for themselves.) Where the Church is a *corps d'élite*, it is natural to postpone joining till you feel sure of yourself: where it is regarded as an educational institution, the educational process can hardly begin too soon.

Deferment of baptism creates its own problems. The Western Church got over the difficulties by two devices: (*a*) the *limbus infantium* for the disposal of unbaptized babies who had died in a state of original sin; and (*b*) the splitting of the original single rite of admission into two. This meant that baptism could be given to infants, and the completion of the rite by confirmation and first communion could be sought when a more responsible age had been reached. The East kept baptism and confirmation (or confirmation and baptism) together in a single rite.

One of the results of the Baptist movement was the restoration of the historic unity of baptism and first communion, which had been lost in the West. At the same time it became possible to proclaim with new force and fervour the old Western idea of the Church as a *corps d'élite*. But the main contention was, and is, that "believers' baptism" is the only kind of baptism that accords with New Testament practice and does justice to New Testament teaching on the subject. If the basic contentions of the Baptist position are granted, it is difficult to evade the conclusion that infant baptism is a meaningless rite; and strict Baptist logic would seem to require an attitude towards infant baptism similar to that of Cyprian towards the baptisms administered by heretics.[1]

The strength of the case against infant baptism lies in the complete or almost complete silence of our early records on the occurrence of such baptisms, and the readiness with which New Testament statements about baptisms—notably that in Romans 6—lend themselves to an interpretation in terms of immersion of the candidate on his profession of faith. But even

[1] The least impressive part of Barth's pamphlet is his attempt to avoid the logical consequences of his adoption of Baptist basic principles.

in Romans 6 the comparison of the baptismal rite with the death and resurrection of Christ is a comparison made by the Apostle between a fact of history and an existing rite. It does not mean that the rite was designed to illustrate or imitate the death and resurrection of the Lord. If that had been desired, something more like the events to be copied could no doubt have been devised. The fact is that Paul found baptism already there as the rite of initiation into the Christian community. Another way of saying this is that the baptized person becomes a member of the Body of Christ. Now if we are to take the Pauline doctrine of the Body of Christ seriously, we must reckon with the idea that in the Passion of our Lord the Body of Christ was in some sense crucified, dead, and buried, and on the third day rose again from the dead. So baptism, by which a person is incorporated into the Body of Christ, can be thought of as the means by which he comes to share in the death and resurrection of Christ. But this is not a momentary experience: the members of the Body *continually* carry about with them the dying and life of Christ (2 Cor. 4.10); and though the *full* sharing in the resurrection life lies still in the future (Rom. 6.5,8; Phil. 3.10), it is nevertheless true that there is now a real possession of the resurrection life (Col. 2.12; 3.1). In the present Christ lives in the believer (Gal. 2.19); and the baptized have "put on" Christ (Gal. 3.27). Or it may be said that baptism inaugurates a new mode of existence, which takes place in the overlap of the ages (1 Cor. 10.11), and involves constant dying and rising again with Christ—dying to sin and living to righteousness.

I venture to think that the main cause of most of our difficulties about baptism is an atomistic individualism that will keep on infiltrating into our thinking and persuading us that the matter of primary importance is my salvation or damnation; and that this is a matter of individual decision either by God in His eternal decrees, or by me at my conversion, or somehow by both of us together. Such a view leaves no real place for Church or Sacraments; and to my mind there are few less satisfactory chapters in the *Westminster Confession* than those that deal with these topics. Throughout there is a pathetic struggle to say something about Church and Sacraments that will do justice to the facts of Christian experience

without knocking the bottom out of the doctrines of election and reprobation.

It is not only that we are individualistic: we also want finality in a changing world. The neo-Calvinist wants his salvation to depend on the eternal decree of God; and that means that the rite of baptism cannot add anything or the lack of it take anything away. The thoroughgoing upholder of the gathered Church—if he is not a Calvinist—fixes all the emphasis on conversion, that is, on the decision of the convert; and once more baptism cannot add anything or the lack of it take anything away. In the one case the decree of the Almighty, in the other the decision of the believer, does all that is necessary. On the Calvinist view there seems to be no good reason for observing the rite except that God has ordained it. We are to baptize, and baptize according to the instructions given in the New Testament, because it is God's command that we should do this thing in just this way. On the other view there seems to be no good reason for observing the rite except that it is commanded; and that it seems to have a certain psychological value in reinforcing and confirming the decision already taken by the believer at his conversion, and in reminding the older members of their similar experiences in the past. In the end we find that we have reduced the sacraments to " signs " or " ordinances "; and when we have done that we are already in a fair way to take the heart out of the doctrine of the Incarnation. What is vital is the Real Presence of Christ in the Sacraments; and this is a part of his Real Presence in the Church which is his Body. If so, baptism as incorporation into the Body must be thought of as incorporation into the continuing Ministry of Christ. It is no longer open to us to think of salvation as if one were loaded on to the train for Heaven from all eternity, or alternatively that one boards it at some point by one's own choice. It is rather a pilgrim's progress on foot. *Saluatur ambulando.*

So we come to the central problem, which is at once historical and doctrinal. The historical question is clearly seen and clearly stated by Mr Flemington (pp. 115-8). Why did the Church go on with water-baptism, when the statements attributed to John and to the Risen Lord himself seem to point quite definitely to its supersession by a better baptism with

the Holy Spirit? The discussion of the problem is admirable; and the answer given seems to me to be essentially right. If I understand him correctly, Mr Flemington would maintain that the real authority for going on with water-baptism is Jesus Himself—not a text at the end of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, but the whole person and work of the incarnate Lord. Baptism, like the Church to which it belongs, is a corollary of the Incarnation, a form of the continuing Ministry of Christ himself.

At this point the historical question runs into the doctrinal; and here I should like to suggest that the fundamental issue is not that between Paedobaptists and Antipaedobaptists, but that between those who follow the traditional practice of the Church and those who reject water-baptism of any kind in favour of Spirit-baptism. The crux of the matter lies in Barclay's *Apology for the True Christian Divinity, as the same is held forth and preached, by the People called, in scorn, Quakers;* Proposition XII concerning Baptism.[1] I think that it is arguable that the kind of theological argument that can be advanced against infant baptism will be found to have its logical issue in the Quaker position; and that a satisfactory theological defence of water-baptism against Barclay's arguments will carry with it the justification of infant baptism. To frame such a defence it is, I believe, urgently necessary to relate the doctrine of Baptism to the doctrine of the Church, and particularly the doctrine of the Church as the Body of Christ. It is not possible to do more here than sketch the outline of such a defence; but these seem to be the key points.

(*a*) Baptism is a rite of admission into a society, of incorporation into a body. In Judaism the body in question is Israel; in John's preaching it is Israel prepared to meet the Messiah; in Christianity it is the Church, the Body of Christ.

(*b*) In the earliest form of which we have any record, Christian baptism is in the name of Christ. Whatever else that may mean, it means at least that the baptizand is claimed for Christ. The claim of Christ's ownership is openly asserted when the name of the Lord Jesus is pronounced over the person being baptized.

(*c*) Christian baptism, from the earliest times, is bound up

[1] In the 6th Edition (1736), pp. 409-445.

with the *charisma* of the Holy Spirit. In particular it is bound up with the ownership of the baptized by Christ, which has just been mentioned: so much so, that St. Paul can assert that anyone who has not the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Christ.

Now this incorporation into the Body, this appropriation by Christ, this endowment with the Holy Spirit is all with one great end in view: that there should continue to be in the world, so long as the world endures, *an organism through which the Risen Lord can continue his Ministry*. Baptism is the way in which that organism grows by absorbing new members.[1] The members are not taken in in order that they may be saved, or because they are saved, but in order that they may be available for the use of Christ. Their eternal destiny is in the hands of God, and there it may be left. The immediate business on the agenda, here in the world at any time that may be marked "A.D.", is that Christ's Ministry should go on, that there should be a body responsive to the impulses of His Spirit.

What is the bearing of all this on the question of infant baptism? We may consider this question under the three heads already mentioned.

(*a*) Admission to a community. It is not necessary to defer admission to a community until it is asked for. One does not wait until adolescence to become a member of one's family. One is born into it. I was a Manson for a long time before I either knew the fact or cared twopence about it.

(*b*) Appropriation by Christ. This again need not be deferred to the time when the individual can recognise and admit the claim of Christ upon him. Parents claim their children as their own long before the children can either understand or respond. And so does the state with its subjects. To be a British subject by birth means to be one from birth.

(*c*) The gift of the Spirit. We have no right to set limits to the power and grace of God. It is not the case that God can confer no spiritual gift on us until we are in a position to ask for one. On the contrary all our experience goes to show that the human spiritual gifts, if one may so describe such things as mother-love, are in fact poured out upon the child long before the child is even conscious of them, much less

[1] Cf. Flemington 126 f. where this point is admirably brought out.

capable of asking for them or being grateful for them. The notion that God cannot do anything for me without my express knowledge and consent is simply inconsistent with all our best experience of human life, never mind divine grace. One thing that modern psychology has established pretty solidly is the way in which our spiritual growth can be affected for good or ill by things which happen in infancy so far back that they are not even remembered. We may ask, then, why it should be the case that, for example, the cat's jumping into the baby's cot may affect the personality of that child twenty or thirty years later; but that sprinkling the same child with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit should be a meaningless rite which does and can do nothing for the child. The truth is that we are so hypnotised by the word "magical" in connexion with the sacraments, and so afraid of being considered superstitious, that we are in danger of running to the other extreme and making Almighty God the one completely helpless, powerless, and indeed futile being in His own universe.

The efforts of Karl Barth, the latest recruit to antipaedobaptism, to get out of this difficulty, seem to me merely to involve him in self-contradiction. On p. 33 of the English translation of his pamphlet he says: "The experience to which a man is subjected in baptism consists in being made sure with divine certainty and being placed under obligation with divine authority." In other words what baptism gives is just what is required as a precondition of believer's baptism. Later on p. 36 Barth says that there can be no question of "any objective destruction of the nature of baptism, any objective annulment of its power, any objective hindering of its work, and therefore of any objective ineffectiveness of baptism because of the inadequate administration and inadequate reception of the sacrament". But we have already learned from Barth that the effectiveness of baptism lies not in the "objective" but in the "subjective" sphere. What baptism effects is a couple of subjective certainties or convictions. It will not do to define baptism on page 33 in terms that exclude infants from receiving what the sacrament has to give and then go on on page 36 to maintain that nevertheless the baptisms of infants that have taken place are all valid and effective. It would be more logical to say that infant baptism is a meaningless rite.

As a matter of history, of what in fact went on in the Early Church, the antipaedobaptist case is a very strong one. The argument from silence on the matter of infant baptism is almost complete; and even Oscar Cullmann's powerful argumentation does not seem to me to do more than establish that there *may* have been infant baptisms in New Testament times. But this is a matter that cannot be settled merely by digging up precedents in the Apostolic or the sub-Apostolic Age. The Church is the Body of Christ, created and sustained to do his work in the world; and she must not abandon her right or evade her duty to adapt herself and her methods to the task she has to do. That task defines itself in terms of two factors: one is the mind and purpose of Christ; the other is the given human situation. The former is constant; the latter is liable to no little variation. Moreover our comprehension of both factors has its ups and downs. It is not merely possible, it is inevitable that the Church should learn by experience what Christ means her to do, and how to do it most effectively; and if it were proved to-morrow that not a single infant baptism took place in the first two centuries, that would not prove that the Church did wrong in starting the practice in the third or continuing it in the twentieth century. The crucial question about baptisms is that of the relation of the individual to Christ in His Body, the Church.

I would not end this long discussion without repeating that students of the New Testament are much beholden to Mr Flemington for a scholarly, instructive, and enlightening treatment of his theme.

ECUMENICAL HOPES AND FEARS

by GILBERT F. CUNNINGHAM

THE last issue of the *Scottish Journal of Theology* opens with a series of four articles on Amsterdam which provide much matter for thought and discussion. Professor Haire's summary of the implications is an excellent one, though all too short, for space does not permit him to develop some of the interesting points raised, which one feels he could do most competently. Bishop Warner's article has a special attraction in that it expresses the Anglican view from the inside; moreover, he makes interesting references to the attitude of laymen towards the Ecumenical Movement, and the following pages are an attempt to deal with some aspects of reunion where the lay and clerical outlooks may tend to diverge.

In an earlier issue (vol. 2, pp. 174 ff.) Professor G. D. Henderson has written with insight and good sense about the layman's part in the Church; and he has in particular set out very accurately the reasons which prevent the layman from being adequately represented on such occasions as the World Council of Churches. It is perhaps superfluous to point out that comparatively few laymen are likely to be readers of theological journals and studies, and we are therefore faced with the paradox that although they form the great majority of Church membership, they cannot play more than a minor part in the preparation for the restoration of Christian unity.

Bishop Warner, however, makes a further point when he says that "too many of the laity in all our Churches are as yet indifferent to the evil of disunion, while some actually think it is a good thing". These two attitudes require some elucidation.

The first class, that of the indifferent, will be much the more numerous. It consists in the main of people who are open to conviction, but are as yet unconvinced. They may ultimately be reached by something in the nature of a "unity campaign", but the time is not ripe for such an attempt. Until the Report of the Faith and Order Committee is available,

and perhaps not even then, there are no definite bases on which such a campaign could be founded. There is, however, every reason for drawing the attention of all Church members insistently and distinctly to the purpose of the World Conference, and impressing on them the importance of the issues involved. It seems doubtful if, in the Church of Scotland at any rate, any effort proportional to the magnitude of the cause has been made to induce laymen to take a serious interest in ecumenical matters;[1] indeed the indifference of the "man in the pew" would seem to be shared by many of the "men in the pulpit". There are misconceptions to be clarified, prejudices to be overcome, principles to be established, and the task will take many years. It is during this period, when the Committee is engaged in framing a statement on theological issues, that the Churches should be endeavouring to bring their members to a state of mind such that they will be able to consider intelligently and responsibly the proposals that may one day be put before them.

It might be harsh to call the second division of laymen "the opposition"; for although it may include some whose belief that "disunion . . . is a good thing" is due to prejudice or blindness, it also includes some intelligent and earnest members who have weighed the pros and cons and genuinely come to the conclusion that the *status quo* is preferable to any scheme of reunion which the Ecumenical Movement is likely to produce. That is not to say that they are "opposed" to unity; many of them consider it most desirable; but so long as the prospects of its success are doubtful they feel that to pursue it might do more harm than good. Some of the doubts felt are described in the following paragraphs.

Seriously-minded Church members (both lay and clerical) have for many years been critical of the vagueness which has crept into current conceptions of what Christianity is, and what it means to be a Christian. The anecdote related by Bishop Warner is typical. A century or so ago, in Scotland at least, the layman is reputed to have been theologically inclined; and though probably tradition exaggerates, Scott's

[1] It is of interest in this connexion to learn that the Scottish Churches Ecumenical Association, "designed for Scottish Church people to promote interest in ecumenical affairs among ordinary Church members", is to be founded and launched this month.

Davie Deans was by no means so uncommon a type then as he is now. A generation brought up on the Catechism, and accustomed to the Bible as their chief daily reading, necessarily approached religion from a theological angle; for them the scheme of salvation was logical and orderly; faith and reason went hand in hand. This popular theology seems to have passed into a vague eschatology and then, under the influence of nineteenth-century liberalism, to the subordination of doctrine to morality and ethics, coloured by an equally vague optimism. The successive recensions of the Church Hymnary provide evidence of the change of emphasis. In the latest version Cowper's "There is a fountain filled with blood", the "crudity" of which has offended numerous critics, is relegated to a section near the end headed "Mission Services", while J. A. Symonds' "These things shall be" is elevated to share a page with Blake among the "National Hymns". After reading the two together, one doubts if vapidity is really an improvement on crudity.

This prevalent vagueness of thought, easy-going tolerance, and willingness to accept as Christian any ideas which seem to have a high moral tone, constitutes a serious danger in any reunion. If the leaders of the bodies concerned find themselves in agreement (sincere and genuine no doubt) to such an extent that they can formulate a scheme of union, thousands who are to-day indifferent will be quite ready to hail it as a great achievement and, without either having contributed anything towards it, or even understanding what it is all about, will support it as they would any other "good cause". Thus it would be possible for a union to take place without the new body being more than superficially revivified; the hitherto nominally separated groups of Laodiceans would be brought together under a common designation, and the inertia would have increased in proportion to the mass. Indeed, those whose efforts had secured the ostensible unity might find that the move had been a retrograde one.

A second danger, which is to be apprehended in the future rather than in the present, is touched on in Dr Torrance's article on the Amsterdam *Studies*. The hardening effect of tradition is liable to be intensified by sheer physical size, and there is necessarily a loss of flexibility as the bulk of an organisa-

tion increases. Even the history of the Church in Scotland during the last few centuries provides too many examples of this for us to avoid giving it most serious consideration. Retaining unity, in the true sense, is a still greater task than attaining it. At this stage, of course, it is hardly possible to foresee what kind of constitution the United Church would possess, but doubtless anything resembling the Roman system would be abhorrent to nearly all the Churches concerned. Yet, without any authority recognised as infallible, and without some kind of internal discipline with sanctions to enforce it, one feels that, far from the World Council of Churches ultimately ceasing to be, as Professor Haire puts it, that the Church may appear again as one, it is more likely that it would have to remain in continuous, and not always harmonious, session. We can hardly suppose that history will not sooner or later repeat itself, or that the United Church will no longer be

> By schisms rent asunder,
> By heresies distressed.

The rebel who is condemned to-day may well still be the saint of to-morrow. We are but men, albeit men who claim to have the guidance of the Holy Spirit; and which of us will presume to judge between those whose interpretation of that guidance leads them in opposite directions? We know whither acceptance of Augustine's *Securus judicat orbis terrarum* has led, and may lead again; but what is the alternative? This is not a question that can be settled once and for all; our course seems always to lie between Scylla and Charybdis.

In the third place, there is the danger that the institutional church may grow in importance at the expense of the individual member. We live in an atmosphere of ideologies; of vast movements, which promise all kinds of benefits to mankind in the mass, but in which the component units are of small importance. Men's imaginations are kindled and their enthusiasm aroused by catch-words and slogans and manifestos, which have acquired strong emotional drive, but whose terms few of their users stop to analyse or define. This is the age of planning on a great scale, of ambitious schemes to organise men's lives and exercise control over their vocational, economic, domestic and cultural activities; but amongst all this preoccupation with means, the end is often lost sight of, or taken

for granted without being specified. How far do the millions of words used in the compilation of statutes, orders, white papers and blue books, or uttered at conferences, conventions, rallies and demonstrations, succeed in providing an answer to the first question of the Shorter Catechism?

In touch on all sides with the complications of modern life, the Church too must plan and organise. Congregations which have found that the Bible Class and Prayer Meeting no longer satisfy the demands of their members, have branched out in new directions: we have guilds, sports clubs, youth organisations and social agencies—all good in themselves so long as they are recognised as peripheral and do not become substitutes for religion itself. "There is no reconciliation to God apart from reconciliation with the fellowship of His reconciled people" writes Bishop Newbigin in *The Reunion of the Church*. But in these days, when so many people are content to have their thinking done for them, Christian fellowship may mean little more than attendance at church and participation in meetings held under church auspices, coupled with a notion that church membership involves refraining from doing certain things known to be wrong, or perhaps a quite sincere conviction as to the importance of moral standards—knowledge of what "reconciliation to God" means, or even consciousness that such reconciliation is necessary, may be completely absent.

We are in grave peril of producing a race of so-called Christians who are ignorant of the central truth of Christianity, who have lost the most precious heritage of the Reformed Churches. It must be made clear, and in no uncertain terms, that membership of the Church is not like membership of a political party, a friendly society, or a rotary club; that it does not consist in approval of a certain way of life, adhesion to certain ethical principles, or participation in certain good works. It should, indeed, include all these things; but unless they are preceded by the realisation of the personal relationship between God and man, with all that it implies, these remain purely secular activities.

There is such a vital need for the revivification of our churches from within, for the setting in order of each denominational house, that a reunion on a grand scale before that has been done might be a disaster rather than a triumph. The

discussion of theological agreement and disagreement at the level of the Ecumenical Conference is undoubtedly a necessary prelude to the achievement of unity; but one fears that in present circumstances it may be like putting the cart before the horse. Professor Haire speaks of true and false churches; but if the truth and falsehood referred to lie solely in the theological beliefs held by their leading representatives, this cannot be a full or sufficient measure of the validity of their Christian title. Theological insight must always be the privilege of the few; salvation and the Christian life are for all—and they must be encountered and possessed afresh by each individual before they can be shared in the Christian community. Those who are active in seeking the unity of the Church may at times be so ready to take this for granted, as the most elementary postulate of the faith, that they do not reckon with the failure of so many laymen to appreciate its fundamental necessity. This is, of course, just one aspect of the decline of responsibility, dealt with at length in Mr Reid's article on the Amsterdam *Studies*.

As all concerned in the Ecumenical Movement admit, the existence and attitude of the Roman Catholic Church is one of the great difficulties in the way of Christian unity. In spite of the optimism that has been expressed in some quarters, the examination of the grounds of theological agreement and difference between the participating churches only makes the gulf that separates them from Rome seem wider. But what sort of unity is it that stands not merely sundered from, but almost inevitably antagonistic to, the greatest single body of Christians in the world? If the Ecumenical Church should ultimately emerge from the stage of conference and negotiation, would it be obliged, by active condemnation of the errors of Rome, to widen the gap and embitter the conflict that exists between the two great divisions of Christendom? Unfortunately this is a question that cannot be answered in advance by the leaders of our own movement for reunion, for no one can be certain what the reaction of Roman Catholicism to a reunited Reformed Church would be. We have, however, among our own churches the further difficulty that many Protestants, laymen in particular, hold very inaccurate views on the nature of Roman Catholicism, varying from an undis-

cerning tolerance to an equally indiscriminate hatred. Age-long prejudices distort men's minds; and the excesses of the Protestant Action League or the Orange Lodges may here and there be acutely embarrassing. There will undoubtedly be in addition numerous smaller Christian sects, of varying degrees of importance, which will remain outside a united Church, and the relations between these and the larger body may also lead to difficulties. It is perhaps premature to lay stress on this problem, since it is one that will undoubtedly receive full and detailed consideration should the present proceedings reach a stage where a plan of union can actually be talked about.

Meantime, however, it seems evident that the "first priority" (to use the jargon of the day) is the proclamation of the Churches' central message in such a way as to confront all their members with the nature of the choice which every man who desires to become a Christian must make. It is to the credit of the *Scottish Journal of Theology* that it has made this its primary purpose, and its steadfastness in this resolution will undoubtedly revive and enrich the religious life of Scotland, and exercise a beneficial influence throughout all the Christian Churches.

THEOLOGY AND ACTION

by The Rev. IAN M. FRASER

Prophetic speech and action have been regarded with suspicion both in the old Israel and in the new. The doctors and lawyers of the church have sought to apply the brake ("Prophesy not any more in Bethel . . ."). In the past, theological dealing with prophetic movements has often been haphazard, unsympathetic, or scholastic. We stand now at some watershed of history. It is of urgent importance that sound theology and right action should have a church wedding. In this article I hope to do no more than draw attention to the danger that theological thinking to-day may do less than justice to prophetic action. The theologian may misinterpret the nature and scope of his task. My concern that this should not happen is sharpened by my membership of a movement which I count prophetic, the Iona Community (though in this article I speak personally, in no sense as the Community's representative). Where any such movement exists the theologian has inevitably his contribution to make. There is the obvious need to sift affirmations and scrutinise methods. It is the manner of that contribution which requires careful thought.

A prevalent theological standpoint must be discarded if we are to make any headway at all. It may be stated thus: "The theologian's primary assignment is to get right the dogmatic core of the faith. Spheres of action—political, social, economic —belong to the circumference of Christian belief. The urgent need to-day is to attend to the centre. Correct belief, once set in order, can be applied to these spheres as a secondary task."

The theological standpoint not only downgrades the importance of action by assuming it to be secondary, a circumference concern. It may even put action right out of court. In our brief lifetime to be concerned with the central and the primary is sufficient. If action is neither central nor primary, we are right to postpone it indefinitely. But what of our biblical warrant? We find no justification in the Bible for the belief that sound doctrine can be hammered out in abstraction

from spheres of obedience. Instead we are told: "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." The theologian, though the nature of his function makes it necessary that he abstract himself from his full humanity in order to pursue an intellectual activity, must yet speak *from* his full redeemed humanity if he is to declare any λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ. He must speak not only *qua* technical expert, but also *qua* obedient man if he is to speak theological sense.

The emphasis dubbed "incarnational" is, I believe, much more true to our biblical commission than the one here described. Moses so identified himself with his people that he was prepared to surrender his own good standing with God in order to suffer with them in their rejection: "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." Suffering identification with the people of Israel in their historic situation was a mark of the whole line of Old Testament prophets. Christ fulfilled this prophecy in the manner of His own life. Of Him it was written: "In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God." His incarnation meant the full acceptance of man's human and historic lot. The word "incarnational" as it is used to-day may be an inadequate and awkward word. But the conviction behind it is biblically sound. In our earthly discipleship we are to identify ourselves with men in the context of their surroundings, their social habits, their insecurities, their leisure-time occupations, possibly from time to time their work-situations—even as Christ did: in order that a kinship might be established from which real obedience, and in consequence true knowledge of God, might spring.

One thing we need to-day is a lively understanding of the limitations of theology when it comes to deal with prophetic action.

Boundaries of Theology

Theology is an intellectual science. From God's self-revelation and man's response within the church, it draws its content. But to appraise and formulate, it must withdraw from this living relationship and proffer a particular obedience,

the obedience of the mind bent on appraisal. This particular obedience must not be allowed to usurp others. The obedient response which takes the form of action is not to wait on a theological certificate of propriety before it can get into gear. Before obedient action is initiated, it can be estimated (though we cannot clearly forecast what God will do with any man or movement willingly set in His hands). Once it has taken place it can be evaluated (provided new light is sought from God in it, as well as previous norms applied). But action cannot permit itself to be galloped around only within defined theological fences. An act is always a risk. It implies leaving secure theological ground through faith in God who is the ground of theology. It means losing one's life in the faith that thereby life will be found. Action is related to theology intimately, but it is not under final authority except to God Himself, in His unique right to call men to any form of response to Him in this world.

We must be clear where theology has a right to set boundary flags, and where it has no such right. This is specially necessary when we deal with the basic acts of the life of faith—the act of worship and the act of personal obedience.

When worship is contemplated, and when we look back on it, theological criticism has a necessary place. But it has no place in the act itself. The mind too must bow before God in worship—it must not police the other parts of the personality to see that they behave seemly before Him. Its only right, face to face with God, is the right to abandon itself to Him. We strongly insist on intellectual safeguards to stand sentry over our faith in Western Christianity. Mysticism is regarded with suspicion, even when it is Christo-centric. We are right in our emphasis—when we are simply affirming the belief that God is found in light, not in darkness; that the lighted mind may know Him and the darkened mind will not. But our tendency to penetrate the very act of worship itself with theological safeguards denotes a failure to distinguish between two forms of obedience to which the mind must assent—obedience which means temporary withdrawal, and obedience which means participation in a total response. In the life of faith, the mind must often take the latter course. The primal response of man to God is not a theological affirmation but a cry of recognition:

"Abba, Father". Man's wrestling with God, his fellowman, the world, is ultimately the Spirit making intercession for us "with groanings which cannot be uttered". Man's standing before God depends on his being "in Christ"—a condition which defies analysis into theological components. Worship belongs to this category of total response of spirit to spirit. In worship the mind must not analyse but recognise. It must not weigh in the balances but bow down "lost in wonder, love and praise". (The point at which the mind bows in worship is not the point at which rationality is abandoned. It is the point at which rationality is fulfilled. Face to face with God, the intellect rightly discerns its Source and Salvation, and realises its own heteronomy. To do so and to continue to pretend autonomy would be an irrational act. The intellect, at this point, can preserve its nature fully only by participating in the response of the whole man confronted by God.) Worship, an act of response, stands beyond the boundaries which theology, an intellectual science, may try to set to it. The theologian must risk what may happen to Him in worship. His theological categories must not be made a plumb-line to set against God, in this most intimate meeting with His redeemed—when his only appropriate response is to offer himself to God without reserve.

The act of personal obedience to God in this world possesses a similar character to the act of worship. The academic theologian tends to bite his nails about action on the part of individuals or groups which cannot be compassed by known theological categories, or checked in terms of prevailing theological thinking. But obedience to the living God must always surge beyond present theological containing walls. When Abraham went out, he knew not whither he went. The business of theology is not to circumscribe such obedient action. It is to feed on it. Not only through His mighty acts in history but also through acts of personal obedience within the Church, God reveals Himself. At the point at which obedience is required of us, we betray Christ if we offer further analysis as a substitute.

Between the idea
And the reality,
Between the motion
And the act
Falls the shadow.

In the life of faith there is no substitute for the act, nor any way of issuing an approved theological passport for it before it steps abroad. What lies beyond the dividing shadow is the territory of God's whole redemptive purpose for His world. As guides in this land our little charts are antiquated before the ink is dry on them.

Theology draws its very life from worship, and in that life draws its nourishment from obedience. "You must sit down", says Love, "and taste my meat". When the Bread of Life is offered us, we must venture our lives and receive it; we must allow it to become food for our working muscles. The Bread from Heaven is given for the life of the world.

The Limitations of Systematic Theology

In a time of theological ferment and flux, such as that in which we now stand, the limitations of systematic theology are especially apparent.

Theological systems are end-products. They follow times in which the Church has made some fresh response to God's revelation of His purpose. Their value is that they give coherence and pattern to our knowledge of God; they build together, into a rational whole, things most surely believed through the centuries, together with new substance afforded by a particular period of theological thinking. The danger is always that a particular theological pattern may be impressed beyond the time of its validity. Canon Demant, in a recent essay on Civilisation, points out how a civilisation which has given an integrated pattern to the life of one region of the world, may persist beyond its time and become a decaying weight upon fresh civilising forces. Theological systems may follow the same course. Continual adjustment of theological systems is necessary in the light of continuing worship and obedience.

In any case theological systems, rightly conceived, do not confront movements of obedience, as a camera study of old Battersea Bridge might confront the Whistler interpretation. The terror and the mist can never be absent. Wherever an edifice of Christian belief is raised which is quite clear in outline and self-confident in detail—we may be sure that justice is not done to the mystery of God's revealed nature, and the ultimate

frailty in comprehension of man's reason. From Sterne to Joyce, a literary Remnant have affirmed that the only pattern which does justice to our understanding of life is a pattern which shadows out the disjointedness and inadequacy of our knowledge. The Bible, in the manner of its proclamation, should give us a salutary jerk at this point. Who will fathom and set in order the revelation of God contained in parable, paradox and sacrament?

It should not be asked of present prophetic movements that their character should form a picture to fit any present theological frame. Such movements, wherever they are found, will provide material for new theological systems: and may remind us of the essentially fragmentary nature of any such systems.

The theologian does not command a seismograph, by whose recordings he may affirm whether movements of obedience are genuine or not. Neither the method nor the form of theology allow it to take up such a position of authority *vis-à-vis* movements of obedience. But the theologian can have a word which is prophetic in its insight. He may humbly learn from obedient action taken within the Church: and must speak at least from a position of sympathetic identification, if not from participation. Humility and prayer may give astonishing insights where physical participation is denied.

The awareness we have of the limitations of theology when we deal with action taken in response to God must have this added to it—a discovery of gifts, sometimes overlooked, by which theological utterance may sharpen its prophetic character.

Contemporaneity a Gift

Our age provides the spectacles through which we see. Even when we evaluate past theological thinking we are influenced by a contemporary slant. This is unavoidable. We cannot disrobe ourselves of our contemporaneity. There are so many avenues by which the influence of our times falls upon us, that our only freedom lies in the death-wish of the hermit's life. The theologian needs to be aware of this. He must refuse to attach a timeless quality to matters which owe their form and content largely to the contemporary nature of their utterance.

When the theologian is aware of the pressure upon him of his times, he often still retains a nostalgia for a timeless theology —in which theological categories are unchanging, and conduct has its fixed liturgy. This is ultimately a longing for life "where no temple is". We are severely straitened in this life. Our lives are nine-tenths determined for us. Out of the billions of years of the earth's life, personal existence has been given to us for these particular few years. Out of the stretch of the universe, this island. Out of the possible races, nations, families—this race, this nation, this family. We are severely tied down in any search for a timeless theology.

Is it not God who frustrates us in this search? Why does God set us, determined beforehand in our age, our environment, our race, on this tiny spot at this particular time? Time is not meaningless to God who created it. History is not haphazard to the Lord of history. Created human folk can never, in spite of their capacity for self-transcendence—a reminder of their origin and true destiny—be particularly involved in all history, or immediately bound up with the life of all geographical regions. God knows that the impression of His whole design, nakedly discovered, would blind and shatter us. So it is in the particular mornings and nights of the life given to us that we may know Him and take our part in His purpose. "Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge." In the days and nights of our place and generation, we may add to mankind's knowledge of God through worship and obedience that which no other generation can provide—since the revelation of Himself which God gives in these particular days and nights is denied to all others.

A particular age, with its own unique features in history, in which we are necessarily involved should be seen to be a gift from God. Contemporaneity cannot be avoided. Christ would not have His disciples avoid it ("I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world"). God did not haphazardly bring us to birth—but that in our time some eternal weight of glory might be given, for us and for all men. By responding faithfully to God's gracious act in giving men life within different periods of history, the Church gathers to itself the fullness of Christ's indwelling and commission throughout all ages.

Our own age is a gift from God. It follows that we, in our response to God, must be "incarnational". We must stand in full identification with the particular loves, frustrations, and longings of mankind to-day. Having made men our brethren through being involved in their lot (cf. Heb. 2.17), we must open ourselves, on their behalf and on our own, to God's work of mercy and judgment.

Where the age is accepted as a channel of revelation, and the particular response sought which God requires in a contemporary situation, theology may glean, with patience and sympathy, a lasting harvest. It is where the attempt is made to understand our age, and find what in particular God requires of us within it, that theology gains. From movements which arrogate to their message a spurious timelessness, theology may draw no nourishment.

The Gift of the Scriptures

It may be thought that sufficient emphasis is laid to-day on the need for theology to be rooted in the Scriptures. But I believe the theological use to be made of Scriptures is too narrowly conceived. In particular their gift is not sufficiently thought of as a companion to the gift of contemporaneity.

The Bible is commended most often for devotional reading. Devotional reading implies sound exegesis of, and meditation on God's law. But the weight of the word "devotional" is against emphasis on the particular time-context in which we are placed. If there is not complete dissociation, at least the field of contemporary decision is shaded in very lightly. The attention given to it is indirect. We must ask a pertinent question. Are the Scriptures given for the salvation of men to-day, in the whole nexus of their relationships and decisions, or are they not? If they are, and we enter into our closet and shut the door to study the Scriptures, we must shut in the particular needs of our time—not shut them out. The forgiveness of sins Christ proffers cannot be dissociated from His power and desire to heal the sick of the palsy. When we look for Christ's word of forgiveness in the Scriptures, we must also expect to find his word of healing for the palsies of our time. Otherwise we refuse part of the gospel. By the devotional reading of the Bible as a means simply whereby individual

and family character may be strengthened, we must miss God's saving word given in the Scriptures for our whole generation. John Newton sang hymns above the slave-holds. The nineteenth century factory owner worshipped God and exploited his neighbour. To-day there are vast areas of industrial and social life which are deprived of an adequate Christian witness—because the biblical word of deliverance for their particular ailments has not been sought.

At the far pole from the devotional method is the Oxford Group method of Bible study. The Bible is considered to be chiefly a means whereby God gives guidance for immediate action in a contemporary situation. Events which lie just ahead are illuminated by Bible study, and directions for dealing with them given. This must surely be called a quite utilitarian use of the Bible. God's impact on human life is thus limited to the illumination which we immediately desire. But what provision is made for scribe instructed unto the kingdom? Not only his rations for the day, but a householder's treasure of things new and old.

The concept of "middle axioms" seeks to do justice both to the biblical record and to the particular needs of our time. It does not separate them to lay emphasis on the one or on the other. It seeks to hold them in fruitful tension. The concept carries with it both safety and danger. Its safety lies in its firm belief that the gospel is redemptive for our times, that we must accept the tension of being in our age colonists of heaven. Its danger lies in the temptation to substitute for action itself the carefully worded definition of right action.

> . . . Between the motion
> And the act
> Falls the shadow.

People may feel righteous when their blood boils at wrongs they see, and consider that reaction sufficient. Committees may get a vision of God's redemptive purpose for a palsied age, and bury the vision decently in the formulae of their report. No hand may be stretched out to heal.

We must give weight in the Church to a use of the Bible in which a livelier relationship is preserved between Bible study and the healing of our modern diseases. Part of the true character of the Bible may thus be given back to it. For the

gospel which the Bible contains is not only for us, and for our families, but for society. The Christian is obliged to take social action which merits the name biblical. Such action is possible and may be initiated within the Church.

An individual or group, opening themselves to the revelation of Himself which God will give through a particular age may find some disease of common life, or some open sore which calls for attention. The problem will be studied so that there is a thorough knowledge of its nature. The Bible will be studied with similar thoroughness in passages where God's declared purpose clearly illuminates the situation. After much careful preparation action will be taken. It will be prayerful action. It will be concrete action. It may mean badgering authorities. It may mean doing manual work of some kind. Somehow, by direct or indirect methods, a stumbling block will be removed. The nature of the problem may be such that a series of acts may result, recourse being made again and again and again to the Bible.

But it is not sufficient to let the contemporary scene raise its voice and point its own needs. Contemporary man may be quite mistaken about his real needs. The Bible illuminates not only situations which men acknowledge to be diseased. The Bible gives us new eyes with which to look out on the world and see diseases previously unnoticed, or unacknowledged outside the Church. The impulse to Christian action may very well come, not from the "still, sad music of humanity" but from Bible study. There will be this difference from the devotional study of the Bible: God's word will be unfolded, not into a social vacuum, but into a live situation which calls for action. Proceeding from this Bible study, accurate knowledge of the contemporary situation will be sought. Knowledge of the situation must then be held in tension with knowledge of the witness of the Bible while the problem is being dealt with by action.

In Scotland, the Christian Workers League has pioneered group action of this kind. Christian Action Youth groups now use the same method. Biblical action of this nature should not stand as an offence to theology, but should nourish theology. Indeed, without it theology will become a dessicated branch in God's hand, instead of a weapon of light.

The Holy Spirit is at large in the world and specially indwells the Church. By biblical action such as we have described, we may see the Holy Spirit initiating within the Church a response to His own gracious work in the world.

Ungathered Theological Resources

If theology was ever a matter for solid working-class discussion in the Scotland of our forefathers, it is certainly not so to-day. Theological thinking develops untrammelled by any worthy contribution from the men who are embroiled in ongoing working-class life. The ministry of the Church draws its recruits from all classes, but after six or seven years academic training they emerge clearly members of the middle class. Whatever lay contribution we have in Assembly commissions and committees comes overwhelmingly from the same class.

Yet the assumptions on which theological thinking proceeds in any age are not determined simply by the gospel. They are also class-determined. The theologian does not cease to be a member of his own class when he declares the gospel. Emphases, constructions, interpretations may be—if he is not alive to the danger—means of intruding into the gospel particular interests he wishes to promote. The concern the Bible shows for the poor may be spiritualised—the poor become always the poor in spirit, whatever their earthly estate. Christ's healing miracles may be made out to be simply signs that the kingdom has come among men: the physical rehabilitation of men, born of His compassion for their need, may be downgraded in importance. "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn" may be used to justify a cry for ever-increasing stipends. (The plea that ministers' spiritual effectiveness is impaired by financial worry disregards the contrary possibility—if ministers do not share the financial worries of common folk, they will lose in spiritual effectiveness.) If the working classes were making an effective theological contribution in the Church, trends like these might be checked and their basis shown to be not gospel truth but class interest.

Theological phraseology very much needs the concretion of working-class thought. Seas roll between our usual theological phraseology and the language in which Christ spoke. It is lit up from beginning to end with images from house-keeping,

farming, fishing. (In my comments on theological systems, I mentioned their value in building things into a "rational whole". What would Peter, James and John, fishermen, have made of a "rational whole"?) Common theological language seems to take its imagery from abstract mathematics principally. When it is thus divorced from the daily traffic of men, when their eyes do not kindle at the familiarity of the colours in which God's purpose is set forth, the very gospel itself is held back from them.

> What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow
> Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,
> You cannot say, or guess, for you know only
> A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,
> And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,
> And the dry stone no sound of water.

Theology and Action

Christ is present to our world in the life of the Church. Through the Church His compassion must be ministered to men. The early disciples were sent out into the world bearing the Announcement of the Kingdom. This involved preaching and healing; the Announcement comprised both word and act of compassion. Proclamation, then as now, is never a matter of word only, but of word, of act, of compassionate life. Yet the act always leads into uncharted territory. When we respond to Christ in this world we must always walk by faith—never by sight. Our guarantee of rightness in doing so, does not lie in the theological correctness of the steps we take. There is no way of judging this beforehand; and we must not scale down the grand territory of God's purpose to make it fit the charts we possess. Our guarantee lies only in the God to whom we respond in faith. The will which determines to obey God beyond known boundaries operates in God's world. It abandons itself, not to any devil, but to God in Christ. There lies its sole security. No obedience of the mind alone can take the place of this response of the whole personality.

Yet the place of theology *vis-à-vis* movements of obedience is of supreme importance. The harvest of prophetic action can neither reach full maturity nor be gathered for the Church without the co-operation of the prophet-theologian. The

danger of the esoteric and the irrational is ever-present—theology is a means of testing the spirits, whether they be of God. The temptation to distort the whole gospel by the pressure of a new emphasis is ever-present—theology may give perspective by bringing to bear the grand sweep of God's revealed purpose, known throughout history. The pressure of traditional theology upon new revolutionary movements is salutary: a reminder that God has not been dumb up to the point of their initiation, nor does He speak finally through them now. Sound theological thinking is a necessity of the life of discipleship, however elementary that thinking may be in character: and when it is mature, it helps to make authentic and rich the obedient life.

A caveat uttered by A. D. Lindsay in his Introduction to Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* may be left with the theologian who would (as he should) become concerned with movements of obedience. Movements, like individuals, may be disturbingly intractable to the tidy theological mind:

> The original thinker is too much occupied in trying to express the creative thought which is welling up within him to trouble about getting it all straightened out. There are always parts of his work which he has taken over as they stood from other people. There are always bits of dead wood in a great man's work. The really tidy and consistent thinkers are the average-minded disciples who make a neat and orderly system out of their master's work, in which inconsistencies are explained away, and much of what makes the man worth reading explained away along with them. For, unfortunately, it is much easier to make a tidy pattern out of dead wood than out of growing shoots.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Authority of the Old Testament. By A. G. Hebert. Faber and Faber, 15s.

Three quotations will illustrate the starting-point of Fr. Hebert's latest volume. "This book is concerned with the authority of the Old Testament rather than that of the Bible as a whole" (p. 9). "The difficulty of the problem is felt in the conflict . . . between the historian, who starting from the ordinary assumptions of scientific study, takes it for granted that 'miracles do not happen', and that of the same writer as a Christian believer, desiring to make the Christian affirmations of faith." "A perplexing dilemma between a critical study of the Bible which resolves it into a composite of human utterances and robs it of its divine authority as the word of God to man, and an assertion of the divine character of the Bible which regards it as being therefore free from all possible error, and is therefore compelled to repudiate the methods and the conclusions of the critical historian" (both on p. 8). Right away these sweeping statements are unfair both to the great English and Scottish historians, and to our biblical scholar whether "Liberal" or indeed "Conservative", of whose methods and conclusions the learned author makes full and approving use.

The plan of the book includes three main sections. In the first three positions are described, the Conservative doctrine of Biblical inerrancy, the Liberal-Protestant attitude in which most of us have grown up, and the Liberal-Catholic tradition which claims to hold the best of both as valuable but fails to reconcile them. Then follows a critical estimate of the strength and weakness of the Conservative and the Modern positions. Fr. Hebert can be very fair in his statement of all sides and deserves praise for his generous appreciation of writers with whom he disagrees to a greater or less extent. But he does select somewhat extreme examples, making the antithesis sharper than it need be, magnifying the actual distance between the protagonists, as is shown in the quotations given above. However, the conclusion of Part I is that "the task of the Christian student is then to use critical methods to the full while seeing the Bible always as the Book of the Faith". So far so good. He then proceeds to his second main section: "A historical survey of the contents of the Bible, from the point of view which has been stated."

This turns out to be a study of how the Law (Chap. 5), the Prophets and the Writings (Chap. 6) came to be regarded by the Jews as "canonical". Chapter 5 rather surprisingly includes between the canonisation of Deuteronomy in 621 and the Priestly Document in 397, two sections on the pattern of the Messianic Hope and the promised Return of the Presence. Chapter 7, The Old Testament in the New, is rather a transition to Part III largely occupied by an examination of the "theological" and the "illustrative" uses of the Old Testament by the New Testament writers, and in particular by a section on "Homology", Phythian-Adams' term to describe the designed parallel between the divine operation in the First Redemption and in the Second. "Theological" in this chapter means "that type of argument based on the Old Testament texts in which the incomplete accomplishment of the divine Purpose for man's Salvation in the Old Testament is brought to completion in the New."

The third part of the book "draws the argument together in an examination of the use of the Old Testament in the Church". So Chapter 8 discusses the literal interpretation of the Old Testament, and Chapter 9 the spiritual interpretation (*both* of which are said to be "of obligation" for Christians), with sections on the theological use in Christian dogma and the theological use in the Liturgy. The final chapter again "draws the various threads together in a study of the relation of the Bible to the Tradition of the Church". But we have travelled a long way from the professed objective of establishing the authority of the Old Testament, rather than that of the Bible as a whole.

Now why does the reader, particularly if he be a student of the Old Testament or if his keen interest should lie in discovering in the Old Testament the indispensable foundation of Christian Ethics in their social application, lay down this profound and interesting book with a vague sense of disappointment? Fr. Hebert starts off so hopefully: "Ignorance must not be preferred to knowledge even when it has patristic or ecclesiastical authority"; and withal so modestly: "It is his hope that the questions have been asked and the problems raised in the right way, and that others will be able to make more adequate use of the material here provided." He continually uses with approval the conclusions of modern Old Testament scholars and their expositions.

On the general or preliminary matter of the method to be employed one question obstinately rears its head at many places. Is it possible for Creeds and Confessions, St. Thomas Aquinas, the Anglican Liturgy, recent Papal Encyclicals, or Prof. C. H. Dodd to confer upon the Old Testament any "authority" which it did not

possess before? If a Roman Catholic scholar were told that the Old Testament derived any authority from the *Westminster Confession*, would he not say gracefully but very firmly that such an argument was standing upon its head? If the belief that God revealed His word through human writers be dangerous, because it involves a real possibility of error, have the undoubtedly human framers of doctrinal statements been miraculously safeguarded? This is straining at the gnat and swallowing the camel.

In what sense the New Testament confers authority upon the Old is another matter. It is doubtful whether the handling or interpretation of Old Testament texts by this New Testament writer or that—often as Fr. Hebert agrees very unconvincing to the modern reader—is really helpful or indeed relevant. The Old Testament is in any case the Word of God both to the Jew and to the Christian. There are in fact many strands connecting the Old Testament with the New; of these the Tabernacling Presence and the fulfilment of prophecy are only two and not the most important. The latter in particular was an argument of much greater interest and importance to the first century Christian, and Palestinian Christian at that, than it can possibly be to-day. Concerning the two "crucial questions" of the Resurrection and of our Lord's Messianic Claim, whether these are historically true is fundamentally important, but how is the authority of the Old Testament affected?

Again, under the heading of relevance, we note the lengthy explanation of "Homology", and of the traditional distinction between the Literal meaning on the one hand, and the others, Moral, Spiritual, Mystical, Allegorical, etc. These have their own interest and would be appropriate in a volume on the History of Scriptural Interpretation. But they appear to be only remotely connected with the quest on which we set out. The claim is made on page 237 that first century Jewish and Christian exegesis can be defended because "in most cases where a particular text is thus misused, some other text might have been found which would have served equally well, so that the argument is nevertheless true to the general sense of Scripture". Here the Madame Tussaud nightmares of "Types" and "Allegory" loom unpleasantly near.

There are further certain matters of detail which deserve notice. Considerations of space compel selection here. The influence of liturgical requirements on the history of the Hebrew Canon is rightly emphasised. But there is need of more adequate attention to the Liturgy of the Synagogue. The Pentateuch is read consecutively throughout the year. Of the Prophets (including Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings) not more than one half is actually read in the Synagogue Lessons; of the Writings none at all except the

Five Rolls on the Festivals and, of course, many of the Psalms. The author is cautious in his treatment of the Apocrypha in this context. But after all these books were part of the Canonical Scripture of the Greek-speaking Jews, and therefore of the Early Christians, and remain so to this day for the Eastern Orthodox Church and for the Church of Rome in their Latin dress.

On pages 183-184 we find: "this thesis that the recognition of the Prophetical books as Scripture marks the beginning of the 'traditional' view of Inspiration", which the author explains means Inerrancy. This curious suggestion would need more careful proof than is given to it. There was a considerable gap between the admission of the second division of the Old Testament as canonical, before 200 B.C., and the rise of the full doctrine of Verbal Inerrancy after the end of the first century A.D. The Septuagint alone is evidence that considerable additions were made, e.g. to Jeremiah, and that quite large dislocations took place in the arrangement of chapters. The work of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion reveals not simply improved translation but often translation of a different text from that which the Alexandrian translators had used.

A real difficulty for the careful reader is to discover Fr. Hebert's attitude to the great Hebrew prophets. He nowhere says plainly that in their company the Christian breathes a congenial atmosphere, that here is the authentic voice of God while other Writings, particularly the Psalms are helpful, but large parts of the Law are a spiritual liability. Only a careful re-reading in different chapters of the book will correct unfortunate first impressions of the author's position, e.g. that the Law is of supreme importance to Christians as well as to Jews, that the Prophets apart from predicting the Advent are merely "educative" (whatever this means), that Jeremiah himself is largely concerned with setting forth the Messianic Hope in preparation for St. Matthew's triumphant garland of fulfilled prophecy, and even that Deutero-Isaiah was primarily concerned to support Ezekiel and the rebuilding of the Temple. Fr. Hebert does not hold with this kind of thing, but he does not sufficiently clearly dissociate himself from it. Were the four centuries of quiet spiritual progress (which used to be miscalled "Between the Testaments") which saw the glory of the Second Temple and the steady development of the Synagogue Service, really deprived of the Presence of the Lord? The picture of Simon the good High Priest at the end of Ben-Sira gives us a better picture of the genuine piety of this period. Again we find (p. 35) "The Hebrew prophets did indeed seek God and find Him in an intense religious experience". But the sentence continues: "It was not the case that this experience formed the basis of their faith." Murmurs of

protest are heard here from Hosea, from Isaiah and from Jeremiah, who would prefer Wheeler Robinson's famous dictum that the Bible is written in invisible ink, until its hidden characters are brought out by the warmth of personal experience.

Finally a general comment or caveat: Elijah the Tishbite reading this book would charge the author with halting between two opinions. Fr. Hebert in his generous Catholicity seems unduly tender to certain Conservative views. Now to-day, in face of the Communist attack, these out-of-date defences are as dangerous as the Maginot Line. "The challenge of Biblical Criticism", we read on page 108, " is one that the Church must take up, and meet it on its own ground." But serious Biblical Criticism is not an enemy from without. In this country, at least, it means reverent Bible study, as "scientific", if that be the right word, as the work of any first-rate historian. It can only be a challenge in any hostile sense to the obstinate Conservative who makes the Word of God of none-effect through his tradition; and he after all in his perverse wrong-headed way is also a Biblical Critic, as indeed is every Christian who reads his Bible. Liddon may have been right in discerning that somehow behind the issue of Faith and Criticism there lay concealed the deeper issue of Faith and Secularism (p. 116). But he mistook friend for foe. To-day Secularism has come out into the open. We must claim not merely the right but the duty of examining the traditions of the Church and correcting their errors. If the Bible student is only free within the limits of prescribed conclusions, what is this but the doctrine of Infallibility as enforced by Moscow?

In a recent broadcast on the best use of Science these noble words were used: "Progress in science is derived from heterodoxy (which vitiates the claim of Communist theory to be 'scientific'). Science means a perpetual challenge to authority: it cannot be directed." Can it be that we are still dominated by our Hellenic heritage to define and to refine in the rarefied air of theological speculation, while outside in the street the Hebrew prophet and the Communist are fighting to claim and to remould this world in the name of their respective deities, God or Mammon? If we are not satisfied that this book enriches our armoury with the indispensable weapon of the Old Testament rightly understood and applied, it is largely because Fr. Hebert has himself whetted our appetite with the high standard of his previous publications.

A. C. KENNEDY

Karl Barths Kritik am deutschen Luthertum. By HERMANN DIEM. Evangelischer Verlag A. G. Zollikon-Zürich.

THE question of the relation of Church and State, important as it

is in every land in which the Church exists and functions, is yet only an aspect of a much larger one, that of the relation between law and gospel. An easy solution of the former question would arise if these two questions could be regarded as virtually co-extensive. In that case the authority of the State could be identified without more ado with the authority of the law of God, and the claim of the Church upon the State would be in the main met by the securing of liberty to preach the gospel of personal salvation and to foster its own inner spiritual life. In many countries in Europe to-day there is serious danger lest this easy solution should be adopted, and even justified on theological grounds, with the result that thereby the Church would renounce its commission to proclaim the Lordship of Christ over every sphere and activity of man's life and become to all intents and purposes a compliant tool of the State. The Church has, however, never fully acquiesced in this solution though it has often gone perilously far in this direction. In some form or other it has always claimed the right and duty of a "political preaching" which witnesses to the rule of Christ in the secular sphere and not alone in the spiritual.

Now one of the outstanding questions of the hour is that of the nature of this "political preaching". Can it be confined to the proclamation of a mere law which remains, so to speak, enclosed within itself, which carries its own sanctions, and which therefore stands in no direct connexion with the Church's word of gospel? On what grounds can law isolated from the gospel be called the law of God? In the Bible, law and gospel are indissolubly joined together, and joined together in such a way that law is never mere enactment but rests upon covenant, promise and gift—in other words upon gospel. In the year 1935 Karl Barth issued a theological study which he entitled "Gospel and Law" thus reversing the order "Law and Gospel" which prevailed in Lutheran circles in Germany. His essay was in part occasioned by a definite political situation. The Lutheran Church following, as it claimed, in the wake of the teaching of Martin Luther, was acclaiming the National Socialist State and the German *nomos* or race consciousness as a concrete expression of the law of God for the German people; an expression which should be accepted by the Church on the ground that law and gospel belonged to two different spheres of the divine rule and economy. The State was the sphere in which the law of God received its most concrete form and expression. The Church on the other hand was the place in which the gospel of grace held sway and the justification of the sinner became event. Something in the nature of a dual revelation of the rule and righteousness of God was proclaimed. There was the divine law resting on the

ordinances of creation of which the State was the most outstanding example, because it included all classes of men within its control and stood sponsor for their security; and there was the divine justification of the sinner who through the law had been awakened to his need of the grace of the gospel.

Events in Germany, however, proved very disturbing to those who held to this theory. The Nationalist Socialist régime refused to respect the spiritual independence of the Church, and strove to make its gospel a mere tool of its own ideology. Thus there arose within Lutheranism the Confessional movement which resisted the encroachment of the State upon the sphere of the Church. The Confessional Church, however, went little beyond a struggle for the Church's spiritual freedom. Holding to what it believed to be the teaching of Luther in its rigid delimitation of the spheres of law and gospel, it left "political preaching" largely on one side, and made but small attempt to assert the rule of Christ within the secular order. Real resistance on the part of the Church to National Socialism as such, was felt to be without theological justification, and to be motivated by political considerations which could not be the Church's concern. In the light of all this, Hermann Diem in a lecture delivered at Bad Boll in October 1946 subjects the whole Lutheran tradition on the relation between law and gospel to a searching examination. He is stirred up to do this by the conviction that within the Lutheran Church of to-day, the situation has not materially advanced beyond the point reached by the Confessional struggle. The Church has now secured its freedom, and is now once more in danger of withdrawing itself within itself and surrendering the claim to make its voice heard within the political realm. Diem maintains that what is urgently needed is a new conception of the relation between the law and the gospel, starting from Barth's insistence on the priority of the gospel, and thus grounding the law on the revealed word of God in Jesus Christ. A considerable part of the lecture is taken up with a detailed scrutiny of the teaching of Luther himself, from which the conclusion is drawn that though the isolation of the law from the gospel cannot justly be attributed to him, yet the mode in which he sought to relate these two things together left the way open for this isolation; indeed, made it inevitable that it should take place as soon as the situation of the Church in the world changed. The Lutheran Church has striven to maintain Luther's positions in an environment wholly different from his; in a society which is now in large part avowedly secular, and with reference to a conception of the State which largely repudiates religious and theological sanctions. And this has been made possible because even within the teaching

of Luther himself no place was left for the community of the Church as the centre from which the co-ordination of the two realms, the spiritual and the secular, could be seen. The Christian as believer, as living through the grace of the divine justification, and the Christian as member of society did not really meet within the community of the Church. A cleft ran right through his life. As member of society he could only be addressed from the standpoint of a law virtually shut up within itself; or open simply to this extent, that through the influence of his faith upon his life, the actual operations of the law would be affected by those attitudes of mercy and mildness which are conditioned by the fact that the law is designed in the providence of God to serve man's well-being.

Diem's conviction is that Lutheranism can be led on the way of Luther interpretation to self-criticism, provided that the starting-point be Barth's reversal of the traditional order, law and gospel into the Biblical order, gospel and law. This will ensure recognition of the fact that both spring from the same source in divine revelation, and therefore that the law is the law of a God who has established His kingdom in the world as the sovereignty of grace. Thus "political preaching" will become a proclamation of joyfulness. It will set forth the Lordship of Christ in the secular sphere in such terms as will free men for glad and thankful service to their fellows.

It would be difficult to commend too warmly this masterly study. It opens up questions which are vital for the Church in every land, and it surveys them from a vantage-ground of wide historical knowledge and theological understanding. It may be described as a preparatory study for a theological sociology.

F. W. Camfield

The Beginnings of Western Christendom. By L. E. Elliott-Binns, D.D. Lutterworth Press. 25s.

Canon Elliott-Binns has already made numerous and notable contributions to Church history and in fields ranging from the early Church to the Victorian Era. In his latest work he goes back to the first centuries of the Church's career. It goes without saying that the number of books on this period is legion; but this publication is welcome as a fresh and attractive survey, the fruit of a wide and judicious investigation of sources and written with an engaging candour and lucidity. The author does not set out merely to re-tell what has often been told before—he assumes that the reader can have access to the "general outlines of the story" in text-books on early Church history. What he seeks, on his own showing, to do is "to give more space to what is less known and less readily available"

as well as to show the development of the Christian Church against its political and religious background. A long-standing interest in the Medieval Church, displayed in his books on the Decline and Fall of the Medieval Papacy, Innocent III, Erasmus and the English Reformation, has led him to trace that Church's origins in the early period. But this work is no mere preamble; it is complete in itself and Dr Elliott-Binns's close acquaintance with the later history of Christendom stands him in good stead as an exponent of its beginnings. He has avoided the stilted chronological method so commonly found in text-books and has dealt with the period by subjects so that his chapters give a synoptic account of its main phases.

One source on which the writer depends—Christian inscriptions—was dismissed by Westcott as devoid of interest but this book uses to good purpose the material, more ample than in Westcott's time, which the inscriptions provide. The information so derived, Dr Elliott-Binns declares, "has about it a naturalness and intimacy which is usually lacking in the literary sources. Moreover the inscriptions, since they are contemporary, constitute something stable in the queer shifting world which formed the first three centuries of the Christian Church." Recent archaeological literature has been zealously studied and used for the enrichment of this book; and topics which but rarely figure in the average handbook of early Church history have a place in it, e.g. the Church and the Synagogue, apocryphal literature, burial customs, Christian art.

It is noteworthy that Dr Elliott-Binns gives due place to the development of dogma in the early centuries. "There is no period in the life of the Church, of which we have knowledge", he writes, "when dogma is not found. There may have been a 'pre-theological age', but if so we know nothing about it, and if ever there was a 'simple Gospel' entirely free from the complications of 'theological sophistication' it has been lost." A later chapter is devoted specially to the Growth of Dogma and we note there as particularly compact and pertinent his account of the "Logos theology". It should be mentioned that the older view of Marcion—as a Gnostic—is held to be mistaken. Dr Elliott-Binns cites Burkitt's definition of him as "a great and original religious genius, the most remarkable Christian of the second century".

It is satisfying to find that Dr Elliott-Binns notes in his Preface the warning of F. D. Maurice against "regarding the primitive Church as a kind of pattern on the mount . . . the only true model of a Catholic Church." Readers who turn to his chapter on the beginnings of the Christian ministry will find that debatable topic discussed with commendable frankness and restraint. It is not to

be expected that they will agree with all his statements. We may wonder, for example, why he imports the adjective into the statement on Irenaeus and Tertullian: "Above all, they recognise the *supreme* importance of the episcopate." Again, when the author quotes approvingly on Acts 20.17,28, where "bishop" and "presbyter" "seem definitely to be identified", the remark of Lowther Clarke: "In view of the LXX colouring we may suppose that *episcopi* is here used of function rather than office", it may be asked: Is this not a distinction without a difference? Nor will it necessarily be agreed that "the truth of the matter seems to be that whilst every bishop was a presbyter, not every presbyter was a bishop". On the other hand, Dr Elliott-Binns observes of the view that the bishops were selected by the apostles as heads of each church: "In this case the office would have been a permanent one and there would have been a distinction between the bishop and the presbyter from the first"; and he points out that in Irenaeus the idea of the transmission of authority applies not only to bishops but to presbyters.

The Scottish reader may find it odd that while a section is devoted to the Christianisation of Ireland (outside both the Roman Empire and the period), Scotland, which came within the Roman Empire, is paid no such compliment. True, St. Ninian is mentioned incidentally more than once; but the late Dr A. B. Scott would have dissented strongly from the statement that he was a "Romano-Briton, educated at Rome".

These comments are not intended to detract from the value of this book. It can be cordially commended and should prove serviceable both to those who teach and those who study the history of the early Church.

D. E. Easson

Le Langage et l'Evangile. By Goro Mayeda, Dr en Philosophie, privat-docent à l'Université de Genève. Labor et Fides, Genève. Frs. S. 5.

This work, the author of which is a distinguished Japanese protestant scholar, will be of great interest to all who are concerned with the problems raised by the language of the Gospel. Goro Mayeda, by studying the means of expression used by the different authors of the New Testament books, makes a useful contribution to Biblical Theology.

Before dealing with the core of his research, the author begins with a chapter devoted to the problem of the tongue in the Old Testament. He starts by studying the account of the tower of

Babel, and concludes that for the Israelites the diversity of tongues is a divine punishment of human pride, this belief being connected with the eschatological hope of an Israel free from the domination of nations speaking foreign languages. On the other hand, Israel does not hold the conception of a holy tongue and in the course of its history will accept foreign contributions. Hebrew is already a combination of several dialects; later on, Aramaic will become the common language of Israelites, while Hebrew remains the tongue of the Scripture.

A very interesting study of the language spoken by Jesus, shows that He taught in Aramaic but spoke also the *koine* Greek. The *koine* Greek was the universal language of Palestine as well as of the whole Hellenistic world. The author finds that for the first Christians the important matter was to evangelise, whatever might be the tongue used for the purpose.

Goro Mayeda, then, in disagreement with the traditional interpretation, refuses to see in the Pentecost story an account of a phenomenon of glossolalia or of a miracle of speaking foreign languages. According to his findings, on the day of the Pentecost, the apostles, speaking in Greek, proclaimed the Gospel with much success owing to an inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The significance of this account is the supreme miracle of salvation offered to the world.

The dispute between the "Greeks" and the "Hebrews" was again not a clash resulting merely or mainly from a linguistic difference, but from conflicting attitudes towards Jewish legalism. Paul, "the Apostle to the Gentiles", is concerned less with ethical than with theological Gentiles, so to speak; thus, his title means "the Apostle to the Sinners".

As far as glossolalia is concerned, Paul expresses very negative views, and instead recommends strongly the prophetic means of confessing one's faith.

A very good chapter deals with the notions of *Spirit* and *Word*. It gives a clear analysis of the concepts of *pneuma* and of *logos* according to the four Gospels, the book of Acts, and the Pauline literature. The New Testament, says Mayeda, is far from divinising the word; much rather does it lay a great emphasis upon the *Spirit*. Furthermore, when it speaks of "the Word of God", what is to be stressed is not the *Word* which is valueless, but "*of God*", that is to say that the Word of God is to be received because it is inspired by the *Spirit*. Again, the *Wisdom*, the *sophia*, is not to be given too much importance in Christian thinking; Paul, in the letters to the Corinthians advises them to distrust both *sophia* and *logos* and emphasises the role of the *pneuma*.

The Johannine notion of the *Logos* is a reaction against both docetism and gnosticism: the Logos of which everyone speaks, is nothing but Jesus Christ. The expression "the Logos was made flesh" means that the Logos has become the opposite of the spirit; as Logos and spirit are akin, thus the spirit has become its opposite —flesh; in other words God has become man. We ought not to develop on a New Testament basis a doctrine seeking to divinise the word; the author, there, sounds a warning against those sectarians who select a few words of the Scripture, whilst forgetting the whole of the Bible (and thus he warns us against *hairesis*). Then he mysteriously refers to some wicked theologians, asking whether "those who build their doctrine upon the *Word*, do not expose the Gospel to the same danger by interpreting it with dogmatic prejudices?" We wonder who on earth they might be. The Logos, divine hypostasis, has not been made by the Church a fourth person of the Trinity.

The conclusions of Dr Mayeda's study are that the Bible leads to a rather negative conception of the language; it attributes its short-comings to man's sin, and also professes a very optimistic hope of a new world where these deficiencies will no longer exist. In a positive way, the New Testament teaches that the coming of Christ opens a new era where all those who accept the Gospel understand one another, thanks to the Spirit, in spite of inaccurate languages. The history of Christianity testifies that it is faith acting through love and not the word which carries the Gospel all over the world.

Although this study is not sufficiently developed and the arguments often lack full proof, we consider Dr Mayeda's work as a useful and valuable handbook for the student of Scripture, as well as for the preacher.

G. P. Moscherosch

Messias, Moses Redivivus, Menschensohn. By Aage Bentzen. Skizzen zum Thema Weissagung und Erfüllung. Abhandlung zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments. Zwingli-Verlag, Zürich (1948). pp. 80 Fr. 7.

This book by an eminent Danish scholar, and expert in Old Testament theology, surveys in brief compass a very notable movement in Biblical studies which has been going on in recent years in the Scandinavian countries. Dr Bentzen's aim is a threefold one: (1) to summarise briefly the course of Scandinavian investigation into the ritual background of the Psalms and other parts of the Old

Testament literature, (2) to appraise the significance of the results achieved, and (3) to offer the author's own contribution to the progress of the debate. His special interest is in the Messianic element in the Old Testament as this comes to expression, first in the figure of the king of Israel, then in the suffering Servant of Yahweh who is *Moses Redivivus*, and finally in the Son of Man who appears in Daniel and the Apocalyptic literature.

The achievement of Northern scholarship in this field is indeed a remarkable one, and is associated for us particularly with the names of Sigmund Mowinckel, Johannes Pedersen, and Anton Fridrichsen in different departments of thought. A galaxy of talented younger men, however, has been actively at work under the aegis of these veterans. It is the special feature of their Old Testament work that they have taken the Messianic element in the thought of Israel to an explanation in its ritual of worship, particularly the ritual of the annual New Year festival which became incorporated in the complex of the Feast of Tabernacles, and that in turn they have taken this ritual to a remoter source in ancient Babylonian and Syrian cult-patterns which have become known to us from Babylonian and, more recently, from Ras-Shamra sources. Following Mowinckel, they have segregated a group of Psalms—the 47th, the 93rd, and those numbered 95-100 among others—which celebrate the Enthronement of Yahweh, and they have shown how these associate Yahweh's Reign with Creation and the overthrow of the primeval forces of Chaos, Rahab and the monsters of the prime. Only, whereas in the remote Babylonian rites these enemies which the Divine power overthrows are gods, mythological figures, in the ritual of Israel and in the Psalms, they are the nations opposed to the God of Israel and His chosen people. They have become "historified", but traces of their mythological origin remain in such features as the giving of the name Rahab to Egypt. Moreover, the victory of Yahweh at Creation has become inseparably conjoined with the redemption of Israel from the house of bondage. A divine historical ground has been created for Israel's hope of salvation from its foes. "The gods of the nations are things of nought, but our God made the heavens" (Psalm 96.5). In the commemoration of the saving acts of the Lord which was made annually in the cult-drama of the Enthronement festival, the worshippers experienced these saving acts anew.

Side by side with these Psalms of the Divine Enthronement we find another group of Psalms which celebrate the institution of the king of Israel, who is Yahweh's vicegerent and instrument for the overthrow of the nations opposed to God. The best known of these are Psalms 2 and 110, but the group is of indefinite range, and

some modern Swedish scholars go the length of making these king-psalms the starting-point and pattern of the Psalter as a whole. The king as a divine figure, the Son of God, had a place in the ancient Babylonian and Syrian ritual of the *Götterkampfmythus*, but in Israel again "historification" has taken place. The king of Israel is not Son of God by nature, but he is Son of God by grace (Psalm 2.7) He sits at God's right hand, and is assured of victory over the enemy nations (Psalms 2 and 110). He suffers and goes down to the gates of death in his conflict, but is not sacrificially slain like the king in the ancient Oriental mythologies, for Yahweh is the God of life. Both in triumph and suffering, however, he has a supra-human significance. He is a present Messiah, and Saviour, appointed by God for the blessedness and salvation of the people of God.

This is the background of religious belief which Prof. Bentzen himself discovers in the Royal Psalms of Israel, not only in Psalms like 2 and 110 which promise victory for Israel's king, but in Psalms like 89, 22, 88, 30, and 132 which depict him in the role of Sufferer for the cause of God. The first main section of the book is devoted to the topics "The Messiah in the Psalms" and "The Psalms in Ritual". Interesting views are advanced with regard to the ideology surrounding the king. His institution is from eternity. In each successor to the throne the first king appointed at Creation—who is the "Ur-Mensch" of Genesis 1.26-28—lives again. The consecration of each Israelite monarch is a renewed pledge of the Divine salvation. Psalm 110 very clearly depicts the stages in the ritual-drama of the king's enthronement: the Divine proclamation of his office, his investiture with the sceptre, the proffer of his people's homage, his institution as priest, the promise of his victory, and his continuous refreshment from sacrificial springs of life. We find him elsewhere under a changed aspect. He suffers, he is afflicted and forsaken. He has the sentence of death in himself, yet, as in Psalm 89, he clings to the Divine promise and is not given over to death. In later times the strength of the Israelite reaction against Canaanite paganism led to the suppression of certain features of the representation. The Jewish Messiah ceases to bear the name "Son of God". The afflicted Servant of the Lord (Isaiah 53) ceases to be regarded as Divine. These, however, were features which Christian Messianism on its own ground of experience was to bring back.

The two last sections of the book, which cannot here be reviewed in detail, deal with the Suffering Servant of Deutero-Isaiah and the eschatological Son of Man. In the Servant of the Lord, Prof. Bentzen recognises definite features of the king of Israel, but he opposes Ivan Engnell's attempt to make the royal idea absolutely normative for the representation. Behind the Servant there stands

the figure of Moses who brought Israel from her captivity in Egypt and offered himself as sin-bearer for his nation. In Deutero-Isaiah a new Exodus is predicted. The God of Israel is to do a new thing. A new leader, the Servant, appears, who has the significance of a second and greater Moses. But this does not wholly obliterate the image of the king behind the Servant. The sure mercies promised to David are not suffered to lapse (Isaiah 55.3).

In the last section Prof. Bentzen turns to the later eschatology and sees in Daniel's vision a "renaissance of mythology" in Judaism. Daniel 7 is an eschatologised version of the Throne-ascension of the God of Israel in association with the revelation of one who, though he figures here as the representative of the elect of Israel, indicates by his name "Son of Man" a significance for a larger world. We have already noted Bentzen's observation that in the Christian religion many of the supernatural overtones of the early Messianic representation make themselves heard again. Jesus Christ has been revealed as Son of God in power. A Divine Redeemer suffers for our sins. This recognition is not the least interesting of the insights afforded by this estimable and deeply suggestive book.

W. Manson

Unbekannte Jesusworte. By Dr Joachim Jeremias. Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments. Zwingli-Verlag, Zürich (1948). pp. 88. Fr. 7.

In this critical and exegetical survey of the *Agrapha* of Jesus, Prof. Jeremias is traversing very familiar ground. But his experience as a lecturer on the *Agrapha* both in academic and in popular circles has convinced him not merely of the intrinsic religious and historical value of these scattered sayings but of their power to evoke a fresher and more vivid appreciation of the terms of the canonical teaching of our Lord. The book falls into a number of well-defined sections. There is first a classification of the *Agrapha* by sources, particularly with reference to the Oxyrhynchus Papyri (pp. 10-24), then by the character of the subject-matter, and here the question of the genuineness of the Sayings is subjected to a series of tests (pp. 25-31). Finally, after a number of general conclusions, Dr Jeremias passes to a detailed exposition of some 21 Sayings which have approved themselves by every test as having a reasonable claim to be authentic, i.e. to rank in character and historical worth with the words of Jesus transmitted in the four Gospels (pp. 34-85).

Attention may be called in particular to some of the general conclusions to which the writer comes as the result of his review of the sources and character of the *Agrapha*. One is that, so far as the *Agrapha* contain sayings of real value, they have come almost

without exception from written Gospels now lost. Another is, that the non-canonical literature as a whole is astonishingly meagre. Most of it is legend and bears the stamp of invention on its brow. The papyrus discoveries of recent years have, indeed, improved the position and raised the comparative value of the non-canonical tradition to a point somewhat above the assessment of J. H. Ropes in 1896, but the fact remains that the non-canonical material has only thrown into higher relief the peculiar worth of our written Gospels. Once again, Dr Jeremias, pointing to the almost entire absence in the *Agrapha* of words offering forgiveness and salvation to sinners, explains this defect by saying that words of this kind, so far as they were known, had already found a place in the Gospels of the Church. It is as hard perhaps to prove this view as to disprove it. When all is said, however, the *Agrapha* possess an interest and importance of which Dr Jeremias's own exposition is excellent evidence.

W. Manson

Call it a Day. By David Read. A St. Hugh's Booklet. 3s. 6d.

The Kindness of God, and other Sermons. By S. W. Carruthers. The Epworth Press. 4s.

Readers of the *Journal* are likely to find the first little book interesting more on account of its technique than its theology. Here are gathered together six eight-minute Broadcast addresses by an acknowledged master of the art. And how much it has to teach by example on the subject of "putting it across"! Not one of these six addresses begins with a text or Biblical reference. Each begins with an account of some personal experience or story, and proceeds so beguilingly that you scarcely notice the speaker is being "religious" until you come to the end. Then in the concluding paragraph you may find you have been led into the deeps, and are confronted by some word of God. The style throughout is colloquial, and thoroughly entertaining. There are no theological terms or homiletic clichés, but considerable use is made of modern jargon. Spivs and V.I.P.'s figure here, and such everyday phrases as "We had a lot of types here yesterday", and "Time marches on", are picked up and looked at. Frequently there is a laugh or a smile.

These little essays will be found extraordinarily readable in themselves, and as a phenomenon they are profoundly interesting. For this is popular religious broadcasting at its best.

The second is a small volume of sermons by a layman, described on the cover as "probably the most eminent elder in the English Presbyterian Church". The sermons provide an interesting contrast

to David Read's addresses. Had you known nothing of the authors, save that one was a clergyman and the other a layman, you would likely have decided that David Read was the layman and that S. W. Carruthers was the professional clergyman.

Some years ago I visited the home of a miner. He attended Church on rare occasions, but he was accustomed to listen in to one of the religious broadcasters popular at the time. "They're interesting", he commented on the talks, "you can't help listening, but there is nothing of the Bible in them." He had been brought up in the old evangelical tradition, in which the accents of the Authorised Version of the Bible were familiar and authoritative. For those of this tradition S. W. Carruthers book will be a favourite. The sermons are undisguisedly based on texts from the Bible, illustrated from the Bible, and thoroughly permeated by the Bible. They are also written with considerable charm. If to one or two of our older members we give an inexpensive book at Christmas time, we might well put this one already on our list.

G. T. H. Reid

The Craft of Sermon Construction. W. E. Sangster, The Epworth Press. 7s. 6d.

A friend of mine, who is a journalist of some eminence, was recently deploring the lack of elementary technical proficiency in so much preaching to-day. "Any journalist", he remarked, "on any paper at least knows that his story has a beginning, a middle and an end. He may be a poor journalist but if he is employed anywhere he will at least know how to write up his story in such a way as will give it a chance of getting across." To this he compared the average preacher very unfavourably. "Surely your colleges", he went on, "should see to it that your students at least know how to present their message in a reasonably efficient and interesting way. I don't expect them all to be highly gifted. But at least they could acquire such a technical competence as to prevent utter ineffectiveness and boredom."

The point is surely worth consideration. In an age in which so much skill is devoted to interest the public in Press, Broadcasting, the Cinema and a hundred other spheres, the Church is not giving the Gospel a fair chance if on the level of technical competence it should prove inept. Of course there should be vastly more in preaching than mere technique. But it should not be lacking. I know of no book better calculated to help towards this particular

kind of competence than the book at present under review. It could well be adopted as a text book in all our Theological Colleges. And all of us who are still capable of being taught anything would do well to take a "Refresher Course" on preaching, by reading and studying this book. The present reviewer wishes to thank Dr Sangster for the help he himself has found in it.

Dr Sangster's title is "The Craft of Sermon Construction" and save for an able introductory chapter offering a "Plea for Preaching", he adheres strictly to his subject. Chapters are devoted to Subject Matter; Structural Types; Psychological Method; The Beginning and the Conclusion of the Sermon; Methods of Preparation; and Mistakes commonly made. Never is the great spiritual end of preaching forgotten. Dr Sangster chooses Bernard Manning's definition of a sermon: "Preaching is a manifestation of the Incarnate Word from the written Word, by the spoken word", and keeps it ever in the reader's mind, so that the whole book is impregnated with a sense of the majesty and solemn responsibility of the preacher's task. But at the same time no other book known to the reviewer is so full of practical help and stimulating advice.

G. T. H. Reid

Zwingli Hauptschriften. Band XI, *Zwingli, der Theologe*, Band 3, bearbeitet von Pfr. Dr. Rudolf Pfister. Zwingli-Verlag, Zürich. Swiss franks 12.

This is an outstanding volume from the new edition of the works of Huldrych Zwingli edited by Professors Blanke and Farner, and Dr. R. Pfister. Like the others in the series it is beautifully printed and illustrated, and handsomely bound. The volume comprises four important works: *Of Baptism*, *On the Lord's Supper*, *Faith's Argument*, and *Exposition of the Christian Faith.* No one who wants to come to grips with the thought of the Zürich Reformer can afford to neglect these works, and no one who reads them carefully, especially the *Rechenschaft des Glaubens* (*Fidei Ratio*), in which Zwingli gives us his apologia, can but feel that justice has not yet been done to this great man.

It is very apparent here that over against the Roman Church on the one hand, and over against a welter of new ideas on the other hand, Zwingli takes his stand supremely upon the fact of Christ, and tests every doctrine carefully by the authority of Scripture. With great honesty he digs down to the bedrock of the faith to Christ Himself, and seeks to think through the doctrines of the

Church on a christological and scriptural basis, especially those doctrines which until the Reformation had not received clear formulation, such as the doctrine of the Church, or had not been brought into line with the doctrine of Christ. Although Zwingli was the most human of all the Reformers, it is from this angle that he is really to be understood, rather than from the humanist tradition of the day.

In the first work we find Zwingli grappling with a problem as baffling now as it was then: how on the basis of Scripture to justify infant-baptism. His sheer integrity bade him admit the scantiness of evidence, both scriptural and patristic, and led him to suspect his own earlier arguments against the Anabaptists. Now he seeks to put baptism on a surer basis by reinterpreting it not so much in terms of a confession of faith made by the baptised, as in terms of a confession of faith made by the Church to the Christian child about the nature of baptism as sacramental incorporation into the body of Christ (*Einverleibung in den Leib Christi*) and about the child's inheritance in that Body as a member of the people of God. Zwingli brings to his support arguments from the Old Testament parallel in circumcision and from the controversy of Augustine against the Donatists. Throughout he lays the whole stress upon the act of Christ Himself to which the sacrament is witness.

In the next work Zwingli carries through the same christological reinterpretation of Roman doctrine in regard to the Mass. Hardly was it published when it was hailed as heresy both by the Romans and the Lutherans. But Zwingli's position cannot be set aside so easily, not when it is supremely based upon the relation between the humanity and deity of Christ. And here we see how hard Zwingli strives to bring in Christology as the key to interpret the sacraments. He takes very seriously the biblical accounts of the Resurrection of Christ in Body, the Ascension, His sitting at the right hand of the Father, and His coming again. That is to say, he refuses to think of the humanity of the risen Christ as docetic in any way, and is forced therefore to think of the relation between Christ present in the Sacrament, and Christ at the right hand of God and to come again, in eschatological terms. He will not have it therefore that Christ is present in the sacrament in the same way as He is present at the right hand of God or in the same way as He will be present when He comes again. There can be no doubt that Zwingli has put his finger upon the crucial point toward which both the Roman Church and the Reformed Church are feeling their way back—the eschatological element in the sacraments. We cannot agree altogether with the way in which Zwingli works this out, but there can be no doubt about the fact that, far from having a super-

ficial view of the sacrament, he sees it in a dimension of depth that was even denied to Luther.

Another way in which Zwingli states his position over against both the Roman and the Lutheran views is by declaring the relation in "This is My body" to be essentially analogical. It was precisely the denial of the analogical relation by the Roman doctrine of identity and its compromised form in the Lutheran doctrine that Zwingli was concerned to avoid, in order to be true to the relation between the deity and the humanity in Christ which is not a relation of identity. It is the constant intention of Zwingli to be true both to this analogical relation and to the eschatological depth behind the sacrament, and yet to teach the presence of Christ to the participating believer. It is significant that in the next two writings which this volume comprises we find Zwingli toward the end of his life laying greater stress upon that presence.

The *Fidei Ratio* is certainly one of the finest of Zwingli's works. It is a reasoned account of his faith in twelve articles which was laid before the Emperor Charles at Augsburg. Highly significant is the fact that it begins with the doctrine of Christ and His two natures. That is the centre of his faith from which Zwingli moves on and outwards. From Christology the second article goes on to speak of God and His eternal decree, while the third deals with reconciliation through Christ and election. The fourth and fifth are about sin as deed and fateful destiny, and about the state of children. The sixth concerns the Church, the seventh the sacraments in general and baptism in particular, and the eighth the Lord's Supper. In the ninth he deals with the customs of the Church and images, and in the tenth with the Word and preaching. The eleventh concerns the Authorities and the final article treats of purgatory. Always Zwingli takes his stand upon the Word of God and retreats from a mistaken position only when convinced by Scripture. History tells us it was written in a hurry but it remains one of the great documents of the Reformation.

The next work has been called by Bullinger Zwingli's maturest and best theological writing. It is deliberately based upon the Apostles' Creed as evidence of his orthodox faith, and was designed as an appeal to Francis the First of France to deal fairly with the Churches of the Reformation. As a theological work it probably has its audience too much in the eye, for a disproportionate stress is laid upon certain doctrines such as the sacraments, the Church and the Authorities, to the neglect of the third article of faith in the Spirit. Ideas in it, however, such as the blessedness of the pious heathen angered Luther and brought from him hard words about Zwingli shortly after when he fell upon the battlefield. There is

no doubt that like others of his works this contains evidences of humanist thought, though probably as Dr. Pfister, the editor of this volume, asserts, these are due to the fact that Zwingli does all in his power to win his readers to the truth of the Gospel. It remains a fact, however, that with all the passion of his faith the Swiss Reformer sought one thing: to make room in Church and State for the creative and redeeming power of the revealed Word of God.

T. F. Torrance

The Church Universal and Local. By Alan M. Stibbs. Church Book Room Press Ltd. 5s.

Dr. Visser 't Hooft once asserted that Protestantism refuses to take the Church seriously, and that is no doubt true of much modern evangelical Protestantism. But the reaction has now set in strongly, and of that fact this book is evidence. It is "an attempt to set forth simply and as far as possible systematically the teaching of Holy Scripture concerning the Church of God". In a series of brief chapters the author explains the origin of the Church in the Redemption of Christ, the nature and calling of the Church, its unity and apostolicity, its ministry and sacraments, all in the language and phrases of the New Testament. The Church is apostolic as a fact of history, but the important thing is that it should remain apostolic by continuing "Scripturally-minded and missionary-hearted". "There are and can be no successors to the apostles, in the discharge of their special stewardship as the eye-witnesses and direct recipients of the God-given revelation in Christ." Diocesan episcopacy has dangers "in a possible tendency towards something monarchical rather than ministerial". Stress is laid upon the local congregation, which can even be called "the gathered company of Christ's people". It is "meetings of the local church for members only which need to be more properly established if we are to see any true revival of Church life. The local church properly meeting together is the key to the situation." The Holy Communion as administered in the Church of England does not further church fellowship because the Lord's Table is not in the midst of the people and because there are so many celebrations. Such a book is not easy to review. It is interesting to find these ideas in an Anglican context, and one cannot but sympathise with Mr. Stibbs' eagerness to revive the local congregation which without doubt is the characteristic unit of Christian Church life.

John H. S. Burleigh

Acts of the Convocations of Canterbury and York passed since the reform of the Convocations in 1921. Edited by A. F. Smethurst and H. R. Wilson. S.P.C.K. 7s. 6d.

The Synodal Secretaries of the Convocations of Canterbury and York have edited with admirable care the more important Resolutions of their Courts during the last twenty-seven years, grouped under twelve general headings such as Procedure, Ecclesiastical Law, Ministry of Women, Marriage, Education, and Relations with Other Churches. There is much in the book of general interest and a good deal of special interest to Scottish readers. York in 1946 (p. 41) is anxious that Clergy who wish a change of sphere should feel it natural to approach their Bishop in the matter without any stigma attached to such an action, and holds that all Clergy should be discouraged from making personal application for individual livings. Canterbury in 1939, concerned with the evils of indiscriminate Baptism (p. 67), discussing the question of satisfactory sponsors, points out that the child's parents may often be the best godparents. Canterbury in 1943, discussing cremation, expresses its conviction that the practice does not in any way affect the Church's belief in the resurrection of the body, and makes what seems an eminently desirable recommendation that "before the ashes are moved from the crematorium, a certificate should be given identifying the ashes as being the ashes of the actual body which had been brought to be cremated" (p. 86). The principle of a fixed Easter is approved and concern shewn for a more adequate Lectionary—a concern widely felt in Scotland. On the question of Marriage both Canterbury and York affirm (p. 90) "that both divorce itself and re-marriage after divorce during the lifetime of a former partner always involves a departure from the true principle of marriage as declared by our Lord", while reserving to the Bishop the right to admit persons, who have contracted a marriage after divorce, to the Sacraments. There are some interesting references to Foreign Affairs. In 1945 the Upper House of Canterbury deplores the expulsion of German families from the Sudetenland by the Czechs as a violation of the principles of humanity which the Allies are pledged to uphold. In 1923 and again in 1930 both Provinces record indignant protest against the persecution of all who profess any form of religion in Russia and express deep sympathy with suffering fellow-Christians in that country. Since then the Russian Church appears to have made its peace with Caesar—at a price. Canterbury in 1929, on the occasion of the reunion of the Church of Scotland and the United Free Church, expresses thankfulness to God "for this new stage in that reunion of

Christendom to which at this time the Holy Spirit, as we believe, is moving the Church throughout the world". There are of course many references to different aspects of reunion. The liturgist will be interested in the forms approved for the Ordination of a Deaconess and for the Administration of Unction.

When the recommendations of the recent Lambeth Conference reach the Convocations, many of the resolutions in the present volume will naturally become obsolete, but it will remain a useful book of reference and a quite indispensable source-book for those specially interested in discussions on Faith and Order. The usefulness of the book might have been increased had it contained a short note on the present constitutional standing of Convocation, on its exact relation to the Church Assembly and on how far its resolutions are binding on the Church of England as a whole—matters on which most non-Anglicans and, we fancy, not a few Anglicans, are far from clear. But the idea of the book is an excellent one which might well be copied in Scotland, where a volume containing the more important Deliverances of the General Assembly since the Union would fulfil an important function.

JOHN WILSON BAIRD

The Prayer Book in Scotland, 1549-1949. By GORDON DONALDSON. David Winter and Son, Dundee, 1949. pp. ii + 30. 1s.

The Scottish Book of Common Prayer, 1929. Notes on its origin and growth, with illustrations from original documents. By ALAN CAMPBELL DON. S.P.C.K. (1949). pp. 52. 6s. 6d.

THIS year the Anglican Church celebrates the four-hundredth anniversary of the introduction in 1549 of the first English Prayer Book, and advantage of the occasion is being taken to commemorate its successors, and to recognise the unique importance which the Prayer Book has always held in the life and worship of Anglicanism. In this important commemoration the Scottish Episcopal Church, an autonomous province of the Anglican Communion, has a special interest. Not only has it made to the evolution of the Prayer Book several very significant contributions, but its current Book, that of 1929, framed under conditions much more favourable to liturgical revision than those enjoyed by its sister and established Church in England, has often been regarded as the most satisfactory Anglican Prayer Book now in use. Dr. Donaldson's booklet on the history of the Prayer Book in Scotland is, therefore, a welcome addition to the literature which the quater-centenary has produced.

Although short and unpretentious, it is in fact a very valuable contribution to liturgical history, and deserves to be widely read. It contains much that will be of interest to Presbyterians, whose liturgical tradition has been enriched by the principles of Prayer Book worship to a greater extent than is usually believed. The Book of Common Order is not, as Dr. Donaldson shows, a derivative of the Prayer Book, but it reflected the influence of its forms and language, and even to some degree of its principles of worship. Particularly interesting is the parallel between the English Sunday morning service of Matins and Ante-Communion (then the usual form), and that prescribed in the Book of Common Order, which has the general structure of a pre-Communion service. Many other important points are made: the Book of 1637, for instance, contained several modifications of the English Book which represent an attempt to incorporate Scottish usages and to conciliate Scottish prejudices; and the "Scottish Liturgy", elevated by some Episcopalians to a position of special prominence, represents in fact only a part of Scottish Episcopalian tradition, and has but lately come into general use, compared with the English Communion Office. It is clear that, directly or indirectly, the Prayer Book has been more influential in Scotland than is commonly allowed. It is to be hoped that Dr. Donaldson's concise, scholarly, and scrupulously fair account of its history will be widely read at this time, and that it will serve to direct the sympathetic attention of others than Anglicans to what is, after all, something more than the Prayer Book of a denomination—part, in fact, of that Christian heritage in which the English Bible holds first place, and which can never be too highly valued for its influence upon the national life of Britain.

The Dean of Westminster, who was once Provost of Dundee Cathedral, and knows and loves the Episcopal Church in Scotland, has written a short and accurate account of the genealogy of the Scottish Prayer Book which will serve as a complement to that by Dr Donaldson reviewed above. Though less comprehensive in its scope, it traces with great clarity the stages through which the Prayer Book in Scotland evolved to become the Book of 1929. There are twelve full-page plates which are of great interest, and the publishers are to be complimented upon the printing and production of the book, though this has resulted in a somewhat high price. It is to be hoped, however, that all who are interested in the Prayer Books of the Anglican Communion will obtain the Dean's valuable and pleasing contribution to the literature of the quater-centenary.

SHERWIN BAILEY

Royal Pearl. By Mrs. A. M. D. Henderson-Howat. S.P.C.K., 1948. 10s. 6d.

This little book about Queen Margaret of Scotland is pleasant to look at and pleasant to read. There is not a great deal of historical evidence available, but the authoress has been through it all and makes the most of it. Her reconstruction provides a glowing eulogy of one whose career was unquestionably among the decisive things in early Scottish history. Whether the Queen was the cultured gentle beauty here depicted or the superstitious blue-stocking virago whom some have conjured up from the same vague evidence, must remain a matter of opinion, but the influence of her personality upon ecclesiastical and social conditions in backward Scotland was plainly very real and beneficial, and there can be no doubt about the skill and imagination here employed in telling the tale. Controversies about Celtic Church origins, the Culdees, etc., are avoided. Legend is set forth with due hesitation and qualification. The writer does not ignore the ugly side of the early Middle Ages nor overlook the barbarism, ignorance and poverty of Scotland, the Queen's raw material: one cannot be a saint except among sinners. But when she looks at Scotland she prefers to see "the sapphire of sea and loch, the dark green of firs and the emerald of meadow-land, the purple of distant mountain and of sweeping heather, the brown of peat-stained burn, the gold of gorse and broom, and the silver shimmer of birch and tumbling waterfall"; and as is her Scotland so is her Middle Ages. Is it an inferiority complex that makes Scottish Episcopalians constantly drag in attacks upon Puritans and Covenanters and what is here termed "the foreign imposition of the Presbyterian system"? At the head of the preface the Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway is described as "Primus of the Scottish Church": whatever he is, he is not that.

G. D. Henderson

The following periodicals among others have been received by the *Scottish Journal of Theology* and are gratefully acknowledged. This acknowledgment does not necessarily preclude a longer notice at a later date.

The International Review of Missions
The Student World
Evangelische Missions Zeitschrift (Stuttgart)
The South India Churchman
Bulletin de la Faculté libre de Theologie protestante de Paris
The Daystar—"a new theological Quarterly"—S.P.C.K.
The Reaper—organ of the New Zealand Bible Training Institute
World Christian Digest
Friends of Reunion Bulletin
Recent Issues of the *Hungarian Church Press*

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